

BELL'S EDITION
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN
COMPLETE FROM
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



CHAUCER VOL. VIII.

And gan bet minde, and refon to him take,
 But wondir sore he was abashed iwis.

Troilus & Criseyde Book II. l. 1027.



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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of ditees and of songes glade,

The which he---made,

The londe fulfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dystyll and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge thurgh his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, flour of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entendement,

Univerſel ſadir in ſcience----

This londeis verray trefour and richeſſe----

The ſirite ſynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabil! CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,

In eloquence balme, condict and diall,

Mylky fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois riall,

Of freſche endite throw Albion iland braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,

As in oure tounge flour imperial

That riſe in Brittain evir, quha reid's right

Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The freſche enamilt termes celeſtiall:

This mater couth half illuminit full bricht,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every tounge ter-reſtriall

As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnigh.

DUNBAR.

VOL. VIII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſſ, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. VIII.

CONTAINING HIS
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE,
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head
Of shepherds all-----

SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----

Him who in times-----

Dark and untaught began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.



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MISCELLANIES.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

AND whilom of this unite
Spake Tullius in a dite,
A man should makin his request 5290
Unto his frende that is honest,
And he godely should it fulfill,
But it the more were out of skill,
And otherwise not graunt therto,
Except only in causis two. 5295

Yf men his frende to dethe would drive
Let him be besy to' save his live.

Also if men wollen him assaile,
Of his worship to make him faile,
And hindrin him of his renoun, 5300
Let him with ful entencioun
His devir done in eche degre,
That his frendè ne shamid be.

In these two casis with his might,
Taking no kepe to skill nor right, 5305
As ferre as love may him excuse,
This ought no man for to refuse.

This love that I have tolde to the
Is nothing contrarie to me ;
This wol I that thou selowe wele, 5310
And leve the t'othir every dele ;

'This love to vertue al entendeth,
'The t'othir folis blent and shendeth.

An othir love also there is
'That is contrary unto this, 5315
Which desire is so constrainid
'That it ne is but will fainid;
Away fro trouth it doth so varie
'That to gode love it is contrarie,
For it maymith in many wise 5320
Sike hertis with covetise,
All in winning and in profite
Suche love ysettith his delite
'This love so hangith in balaunce,
'That if it lese his hope parchaunce 5325
Of lucre that he' is set upon
It well failin and quenche anon,
For no man maie be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But if he lovin more in mode 5330
Men for 'hem selfe than for ther gode;
For love that profite doth abide
Is false, and bidith not no tide:
Soche love comith of Dame Fortune,
'That litil while woll contune, 5335
For it shall chaungin wondir sone,
And take eclips as doth the mone,
Whan that she is from us ylet
Through erth, that betwixtin is set

The sonne and her, as it may fall, 5340
Be it in partie or in all :

The shadowe makith her bemes merke,
And her hornis to shewin derke
That part where she hath lost her light
Of Phebus fully and the sight, 5345

Till whan the shadowe' is ovir paste
She'is enlumined agein as faste
Through the brightnes of the sonne bemes,
That yevith to' her againe her lemes :

That love is right of such nature, 5350
Now is it faire and now obscure,

Now bright, now clipfy of manere,
And whilom dimme and whilom clere,
As sone as poverte ginnith take,
With mantil and with wedis blake 5355

Hidith of love the light away,
That into night it tournith day,
It may not sein Richesse shine
Till that the blacke shadowis fine,
For whan that Richesse shinith bright 5360

Love recovereth ayen his light,
And whan it failith he wol flit,
And as she greveth so grevith it.

Of this love herith what I saie :
The riche men are ylovid aie, 5365
And namely tho that sparande bene,
That wol not washe ther hertis clene

Of the filthe nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning avarice.

The riche man ful fonde is i-wis 5370

That wenith that he lovid is ;

If that his hert it understode

It is not he ; it is his gode :

He may wel wetin in his thought

His gode is loved and he right nought ; 5375

For if he be a nigarde eke

Men wol not fet by him a leke,

But hatin him, this is the sothe.

Lo what profite his catil dothe !

Of every man that may him se 5380

It getteth him nought but enmite,

But he amende him of that vice,

And know himselfe he is not wise.

Certis he should aie frendly be

To get him love, also ben fre, 5385

Or els he is not wise ne sage,

No more than is a gote ramage.

That he not lovith his dede proveth,

Whan he his richeffe so well loveth

That he wol hide it aie and spare, 5390

His porè frendis sene forfare,

To kepin aie his ill purpose,

Till that for drede his eyin close,

And til a wickid deth him take

Him had levir a sondre shake, 5395

And let al' his limmes a foudre rive,
Than leve his richeffe in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man;
Certain no love is in him than,
For how should love within him be 5400
Whan in his hert is no pite?

That he trespasith well I wate,
For eche man knowith his estate,
For wel him ought to be reproved
That lovith nought ne is not loved. 5405

But sithe we arne to Fortune comen,
And hath our ferman of her nomen,
A wondir will I tell the now,
Thou herdift nere suche one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me levin shall, 5410

Although sothfastenesse it be all,
As it is writtin, and is sothe,
That unto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than doth the sote and debonaire; 5415

And if the thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For Fortune debonaire and softe
Yfalsith and begilith ofte,
Forliche a mothir she can cherishe, 5420

And milkin as dothe a norice,
And of her gode to him ydeles,
And yeveth 'hem parte of her joweles,

With grete richis and dignite,
 And 'hem she hoteth stabilite 5425
 In a state that is nothing stable,
 But chaunging aie and variable,
 And fedith 'hem with glory veine,
 And worldely blisse nothing certeine :
 Whan she 'hem settith on her whele 5430
 Than wenin thei to be right wele,
 And in so stable state withall
 That nevir thei wene for to fall ;
 And whan thei sette so high to be
 Thei wene to have in certainte 5435
 Of hertly frendis to grete nombre,
 That nothing might ther state encombre ;
 Thei trust 'hem so on every side,
 Wening with 'hem thei would abide
 In every perill and mischaunce 5440
 Withoutin chaunce or variaunce
 Bothè of catil and of gode,
 And also for to spende ther blode,
 And al ther membris for to spill,
 Onily to fulfill ther will : 5445
 Thei maken it whole in many wise,
 And hotin 'hem ther full service,
 How sore so that it do 'hem smerte
 Into ther very nakid sherte ;
 Herte and hande also whole thei give, 5450
 For all the time that thei may live,

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So that with this ther flatiry
 Thei makin folis glorifie
 Onely of ther wordis speking,
 And han chere of a rejoyfing, 5455
 And trow 'hem as the Evangile;
 And it is al falshede and gile,
 As thei shal after wardis se;
 Whan thei arne fal in poverte,
 And ben of gode and catil bare, 5460
 Than should thei sene who frendis ware,
 For of an hundrid certainly,
 Nor of a thousande ful scarly,
 Ne shall thei finde unnethis one
 Whan poverte is comen upon. 5465

For thus Fortune that I of tell,
 With men whan that her lust to dwell,
 Maketh 'hem to lese ther conisaunce,
 And norisheth 'hem in ignoraunce.

But frowarde Fortune and perverse, 5470
 Whan high estates she doth reverse,
 And makith 'hem to tumble doune
 Of her whele with a sodaine tourne,
 And from ther richeffe dothe 'hem fle,
 And plongith 'hem in poverte, 5475
 As a stepmothir envious,
 And laieth a plaistir dolorous
 Unto ther hertis woundid egre,
 Whiche is not tempered with vinegre,

But with poverté and indigence, 5480
 For to shewe by experience
 That she is Fortune verilie,
 In whom no man ne should affie,
 Nor in her yestis have flaunce,
 She is so ful of variaunce. 5485

Thus can she makin hie and lowe,
 Whan thei from richeffe arnè throwe,
 Fully to knowin without were
 Frende of affecte and frende of chere,
 And whiche in love weren trew and stable, 5490

And whiche also weren variable,
 Aftir Fortunè ther goddesse,
 In poverté, eithir in richeffe,
 For all that yeveth here out of drede
 Unhappe yberith it in dede, 5495

For Infortunè lette not one
 Of frendis whan Fortune is gone,
 I mene tho frendis that woll fle
 Anone as entrith pòverte;

And yet thei wol not leve 'hem so, 5500

But in eche place where that thei go
 Thei callin 'hem wretche, scornè, and blame,
 And of ther mishappe 'hem diffame,

And namely suche as in richeffe
 Pretendith moſte of ſtableneſſe, 5505

Whan that they ſawe 'hem ſet on loſte,
 And werin of 'hem ſucoured ofte,

480 And moſte iholpe in all ther nede,
 But now thei take no manir hede,
 But ſeine in voice of flatirie 5510
 That now appereth ther folie
 Ovir al wher ſo that thei fare,
 485 And ſinge, Go, farewel, Feldeſfare.

Allè ſuche frendis I beſhrewē,
 For of trewe frendes there be to ſewe, 5515
 But ſothfaſt frendes, what ſo betide,
 In every fortune wollen abide;
 5490 Thei han ther hertes in ſuche nobleſſe
 That thei n'il love for no richeſſe,
 Nor for that Fortune may 'hem ſende 5520
 Thei wollen 'hem ſocour and defende,
 And chaungin for ſoſte ne for ſore;
 5495 For who his frende loveth evirmore,
 Though men drawe ſwerdis him to flo,
 Thei may not hewe ther love a two; 5525
 But if in caſe that I ſhall ſay,
 For pride and ire leſe it he may,
 5500 And for reprove by uicete,
 And diſcovering of privite
 With tonge wounding, as felon, 5530
 Through venemous detraccion.

5505 Frende in this caſe wol gon his way,
 For nothing greve him more ne may,
 And for nought ellis wol he fle
 If he love in ſtabilitie; 5535

And certaine he is well begone
 Among a thousande that findeth one,
 For there ne may be no richeffe
 Ayerst frendship of worthinesse,
 For it ne may so high attaine 5540
 As may the valoure, sothe to faine,
 Of him that lovith trewe and well:
 Frendship is more than is catell,
 For frende in courte aie bettir is
 Than peny is in purse certis, 5545
 And than is Fortune mishaping,
 Whan upon men she is fabling
 Thorough misturning of her chaunce,
 And castith 'hem out of balaunce.
 She maketh through her adversite 5550
 Men ful and clerly for to se
 Him that is frende in existence
 From him that is by apparence,
 For infortune makith anone
 To know thy frendis fro thy fone 5555
 By experience right as it is,
 The whiche is more to praise i-wis
 Than in mucche richeffe and trefour,
 For more depe profite and valour
 Poverté', and suche adversite 5560
 Before, than doeth prosperite,
 For that one yevith conifaunce,
 And t'other gevith ignoraunce.

And thus in poverte' is in dede
 Trouthè declarid fro falskede, 5565
 For faint frendis it wol declare,
 And trewe also, what way they fare;
 For whan he was in his richesse
 These frendis ful of doublenesse
 Offrid him in many wise 5570
 Ther herte and body, and service,
 What would he then have you to' have bought
 To knowin opinly ther thought,
 That he now hath so clerely sene?
 The lasse begiled he should have bene 5575
 And he had than percevid it,
 But Richesse n'olde not let him wit;
 Wel more avauntage doeth him than,
 Sithe that it maketh him a wise man,
 The great mischefe that he perceveth 5580
 Than doeth richesse, that him deceveth:
 Richesse riche ne ymakith nought
 Him that on trefour sette his thought,
 For richesse stontc in suffisaunce,
 And nothing stonte in haboundaunce, 5585
 For suffisaunce all onily
 Makith menne to live richily.

For he that hath but mitchis tweine,
 Ne value in his whole demeine,

Liveth more at ese, and more is riche, 5590
 Than doith he whiche that is chiche,
 And in his barne hath, soth to faine,
 An hundrid mavis of whete graine,
 Though he be chapman or mārchaunt,
 And have of golde many befaunt, 5595
 For in the getting he' hath suche wo,
 And in the keping drede also,
 And sette ere more his besineffe
 For to encrese and nat to lesse,
 For to augment and multiply; 5600
 And though on hepes that lie him by,
 Yet nevir shall make his richesse
 Asseth unto his gredinesse;
 But the pore man that retchith nought
 Save of his livelode in his thought, 5605
 Whiche that he getteth with his travaile,
 He dredith nought that it shall faile,
 Though he have little world'is gode,
 Metè and drinke, and esie fode,
 Upon his travaile and living, 5610
 And also suffisaunt clothing,
 Or if in sickenesse that he fall,
 And lothè mete and drinke withall,
 Though he have not his mete to buie,
 He shall bethinke him hastily 5615
 To put him out of all daungere,
 That he of mete hath no mistere,

590 Or that he maie with little eke
 Be foundin while that he is seke,
 Or that men shall him berne in haste 5620
 To live till his sickenesse be paste
 Unto some maifondewe beside:
 595 He caste nought what shall him betide;
 He thinkith nought that evre' he shall
 Into any sickenesse yfall. 5625

And though it fall, as it maie be,
 5600 That all betime sparin shall he
 As mckill as shall to' him suffice
 While he is sicke in any wife,
 He doith for that he woll be 5630
 Contentid with his poverté
 5605 Withoutin nede of any man:
 So moche in little have he can
 He is apaide with his fortune,
 And for he n'ill be importune 5635
 Unto no wight ne onerous,
 5610 Nor of ther godeffe covetous,
 Therefore he spareth, it maie well ben,
 His pore estate for to sustene.

Or if him luste not for to spare, 5640
 5615 But suffrith forthe as nat yet ware,
 At laste it happeneth, as it maie,
 All right unto his lastè daie,

And take the worlde as it would be;
 For evir in herte thinkith he
 The sonir that Deth him yflo
 To paradise the sonir go
 He shall, there for to live in blisse
 Where that he shall no godis misse:
 Thidir he hopeth God shall him sende
 Aftir this wretchid liv'is ende.
 Pythagoras himself reherfes,
 In a boke that The Goldin Verses
 Is cleped, for the nobilite
 Of the honorable dite,

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Than whan thou goest thy body fro
 Fre in the ayre thou shalt up go,
 And levin all humanite,
 And purely live in diete.
 He is a sole withoutin were
 That trowith have his countrey here.

5660

In yerth is not our countere,
 That maie these clerkis seine and se
 In Boece of Consolacion,
 Where it is makid mencion
 Of our contre plaine at the eye
 By teching of philosophie,
 Where leude men mightin lerin wit,
 Who so that would translatin it.
 If he be suche that can well live
 Aftir his rentè maie him yeve,

5665

5670

And not desirith more to have
 Than maie fro poverte him save.
 A wiseman saied, as we maie sene,
 Is no man wretched but he it wene, 5675
 Be he a king, knight, or ribaude :
 Many' a ribaude is merie' and baude
 That swinketh and berith daie and night
 Many a burthin of grete might,
 The whiche doith him lasse offence 5680
 For that he suffrith in pacience:
 Thei laugh and daunce, thei trippe and sing,
 And laie nought up for ther living,
 But in the taverne all dispendeth
 The winning whiche that God 'hem sendeth; 5685
 Than goeth he fardils for to bere
 With as gode chere as he did ere :
 To swinke and travaile' he not fainith,
 For to robbin he disdainith,
 But right anon after his swinke 5690
 He goeth to taverne for to drinke.
 All these are riche in haboundaunce
 That can thus havin suffisaunce
 Well more than can an userere,
 As God well knowith, without were, 5695
 For 'an usurere, so God me se,
 Shall nevir for richesse riche be,
 But er more pore and indigent,
 Scaree, and gredy in his entent.

For sothe it is, whom it displese, 5700
 There maie no marchaunt live at ese,
 His herte in soche a where is set
 That it quicke brennith for to get,
 Ne nevir shall though he hath getten,
 Though he have golde in garnirs yeten, 5705
 For to be nedey he dredeth fore,
 Wherefore to gettin more and more
 He set his herte and his desire :
 So hote he brennith in the fire
 Of covetise, that maketh him wode 5710
 To purchase othir mennis gode.
 He undirsongith a grete pain
 That undertaketh to drinke up Sain,
 For the more that he drinkith aie
 The more he levith, sothe to saie. 5715
 Thus is the thrust of false getting,
 That lasse evir in coviting,
 And the anguishe and the distresse,
 With the fire of gredinesse;
 She fightith with him aie and striveth, 5720
 So that his herte a fondir riveth :
 Soche gredinesse him assailith
 That whan' he moste hath moste he failith.
 Phisiciens and advocates
 Goin right by the samè yates; 5725
 Thei sell ther science for winning,
 And haunte ther crafte for grete getting :

700 Ther winning is of soche swetenesse
That if a man fall in sickenesse
Thei are full glad for ther encrece, 5730
For by ther will withoutin lese
Evèrliche man shouldin be seke;
5705 Though thei die thei set not a leke;
Aftir whan thei the golde have take
Full little care for 'hem thei make: 5735
Thei would fowertie were sicke at ones,
Ye, two hundrid, in fleshe and bones,
5710 And yet two thousande, as I gesse,
For to encrefin ther richesse.

Thei woll not worchin in no wise 5740
But for lucre and covetise,
For phisicke ginnith first by (phi)
5715 The phisicien also sothly;
And sithen it goeth fro fie to fie
To trust on 'hem it is folie, 5745
For thei n'ill in no manir gre
Doin right nought for charite.
5720 Eke in the samè secte are set
All tho that prechin for to get
Worships, and honour, and richesse; 5750
Ther hertis arne in grete distresse
That folke livin not holily,
5725 But abovin all specially
Soche as yprechin veinglorie,
And towarde God have no mem'orie, 5755

But forthe as ipocritis trace,
 And to ther soulis deth purchase,
 And outward shewing holinesse,
 Though thei be full of curfidnesse :
 Nat liche to the apostlis twelve,
 Thei deceve othir and 'hem selve :
 Begilid is the gilir than
 For preching of a curfid man :
 Though it to othir maie profite
 Himself it availeth not a mite,
 For oft gode predicacioun
 Cometh of evill entencioun :
 To him nat availith his preching,
 All helpe he othir with his teching,
 For where thei gode example take
 There is he with veinglorie shake.

But let us levin these prechours,
 And speke of 'hem that in ther tours
 Hepe up ther golde and fast yshet,
 And fore thereon ther hertis set :
 Thei neithir lovin God ne drede ;
 Thei kepin more than it is nede,
 And in ther baggis fore it binde
 Out of the funne and of the winde ;
 Thei puttin up more than nede ware
 Whan thei sene povir folk forfare,
 For hungre die, and for cold quake ;
 God can well vengeaunce thereof take ;

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The grete mischivis 'hem assaileth,
And thus in gadring aie travailleth; 5785
With mochil pain thei winne richesse,
And drede 'hem holdith in distresse
To kepin that thei gathir fast :
With sorowe thei leve it at last,
With sorowe thei bothe die and live 5790
That unto richesse ther hertes yeve.
And in defaute of love it is,
As it shewith full well iwis,
For if these gredy, sothe to saine,
Loyidin and were loved againe, 5795
And gode love reignid ovir all,
Soche wickidnesse ne should yfall,
But he should yeve that mooste gode had
To 'hem that weren in nede bestad,
And live withoutin false usure, 5800
For charite full clene and pure;
If thei 'hem yeve unto godenesse,
Defending 'hem from idilnesse,
In all this worlde than povir none
We shouldin finde I trowe not one. 5805
But chaungid is this worlde unstable,
For love is ovir all vendable :
We se that no man lovith now
But for his winning and for prow;e;
And love is thrallid in servage 5810
Whan it is folde for avauntage;

Yet women woll ther bodies sell:
 Soche foules goith to the devill of hell.

Whan Love had tolde 'hem his entent
 The baronage to counsaile went.

5815

In many sentencis thei fill,
 And diversly thei saied ther will;
 But astir discorde thei accorded,
 And ther accorde to Love recorded:

Sir, saidin thei, we ben at one,
 By even accorde of everichone,
 Out take Richeffe all onily,

5820

That swornè hath full hauteinly
 That she the castill n'ill assaile,
 Ne smite a stroke in this bataille
 With darte ne mace, ne spere ne knife,
 For man that speketh or berith life,
 And blamith your emprise iwis,
 And from our hoste departid is,

5825

At lestè waie, as in this plite,
 So hath she this man in dispite;
 For she saieth he ne loved her never,
 And therefore she woll hate him ever;
 For he woll gathir no trefore

5830

He hath her wrathe for evirmore;
 He' agilte her nere in othir case,
 Lo here all wholly his trespase!
 She saieth well that this othir daie
 He asked her leve to gone the waie

5835

That is clepid to moche yeving, 3840

And spake full faire in his praying,

But whan he praied her poore was he,

Therefore she warned him the entre,

Ne yet is he not thrivin so

That he hath gotten a penie or two 3845

That quietly' is his owne in holde:

Thus hath Richeffe us all ytolde,

And whan Richeffe us this recorded

Withoutin her we ben acorded.

And we finde in our accordaunce 3850

That False Semblant and Abstinaunce,

With all the folke of ther battaile,

Shull at the hindir gate assaile

That Wickid Tong hath in keping,

With his Normans full of jangling, 3855

And with 'hem Curtesie and Largeffe,

That shullin shewe ther hardinesse

To the old wife that kept so hard

Faire Welcoming within her ward,

Than shall Delite and Well-Heling 3860

Yfondin Shame adoun to bring

With all her hoste erly and late,

Thei shull assailin that ilke gate;

Ayenist Drede shall Hardinesse

Assaile and also Sikirnesse, 3865

With all the folke of ther leding,

That nevir wiste what was slaying.

Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite
 With Daungir full of cruilte.
 Thus is your hoste ordainid wele; 5870
 Doune shall the castill every dele
 If everiche doe his entent,
 So that Venus ybe present,
 Your mothir, full of vesselage,
 That can inough of soche usage; 5875
 Withoutin her maie no wight spede
 This werke neithir for worde ne dede,
 Therefore is gode ye for her sende,
 For through her maie this worke amende.

Lordinges, my mothir the goddes, 5880
 That is my ladie and maistres,
 Ne is nat all at my willing,
 Ne doeth nat all my desiring;
 Yet can she sometime doen labour
 Whan that her luste in my socour, 5885
 As my nede is for to atcheve,
 But now I thinke her nat to greve:
 My mothir is she', and of childhede
 I both worship her and eke drede,
 For who that dredith fire ne dame 5890
 Shall it abie in bodie' or name:
 And nathëlesse yet connè we
 Sende astir her if nede ybe,

And were she nigh she commin wold;
I trowe that nothing might her hold. 5895

My mothir is of grete prowesse,
She hath tane many a fortresse
That cost hath many' a pound er this
There I n'as not present iwis,
And yet men saied it was my dede: 5900
But I come nevir in that stede,
Ne me ne liketh, so mote I the,
That soche tours ben ytake with me;
For why? me thinketh that in no wise
It maie be cleped but Marchaundise. 5905

Go buie a coursir blacke or white,
And paie therefore, than art thou quite:
The marchaunt owith the right nought
Ne thou him whan thou hast it bought.
I woll not selling clepe Yeving, 5910
For selling asketh no guerdoning;
Here lithe no thanke ne no merite,
That one goth from that othre' all quite;
But this selling is not semblable;

For whan his horse is in the stable 5915
He maie it sell again parde,
And winnen on it, soche happe maie be,
All maie the manne nat lese iwis,
For at the lest the skinne is his;

Or ellis, if it so betide 5920
 That he woll kepe his horse to ride,
 Yet is he lorde aie of his horse;
 But thilkè chafare is well worse
 There Venus entremetith ought,
 For who so soche chaffare hath bought 5925
 He shall not worchin so wisely
 That he ne shall lese uttirly
 Bothe his money and his chaffare;
 But the sellir of thilkè ware
 The prife and profite havin shall; 5930
 Certaine the buier shall lese all,
 For he ne can so dere it buie
 To have lordship and full maistrie,
 Ne havin power to make letting
 Neither for yeste ne for preching, 5935
 That of his chaffare maugre his
 An other shall have as moche iwis,
 If he woll yeve as moche as he,
 Of what countrey so that he be,
 Or for right nought, so happe ymaie, 5940
 If he can flattir her to' her paie.
 And ben than soche marchauntis wise?
 No, but folis in every wise:
 Whan thei huie soche thing wilfully
 There thei lese ther gode solily; 5945
 But nathèlesse this dare I saie,
 My mothir is not wont to paie,

5920 For she' is neithir so sole ne nice
 To entremete her of soche vice;
 But trustith well he shall paie all 5950
 That repente of his bargaine shall,
 Whan Poverté' put him in distresse,
 5925 All were he scholir to Richeffe,
 That is for me in grete yerning
 Whan she assenteth to my willing. 5955

But by my mothir Sainct Venus,
 5930 And by her fathir Saturnus,
 That her engendrid by his life,
 But nat upon his weddid wife,
 Yet woll I more unto you swere, 5960
 To makin this thing the surere.

5935 Now by that faithe and that beaute
 That I owe to' all my brethrin fre,
 Of whiche there n'is wight undir heven
 That can ther fadir's namis neven, 5965
 So divers and many there be
 5940 That with my mothre' have be prive,
 Yet woll I swere for sikirnesse
 The pole of helle to my witnesse,
 Now drinke I not this yere clarre 5970
 If that I lie or forsworne be,
 5945 For of the goddes the usage is
 That who so him forswereth amis

Shall that yere drinkin no clarre.

Now have I sworne inough parde; 3975
 If I forswere than am I lorne;
 But I woll nevir be forsworne,
 Sithe Richeffe hath me failid here
 She shall abie that trespas dere
 At lestè waie but I her harme 3980
 With swerde, or sparth, or with gifarme.

For certis sithe she loveth not me,
 Fro thilkè time that she maie se
 The castill and the toure to shake,
 In forie time she shall awake; 3985
 If I maie gripe a richè man
 I shall so pulle him if I can
 That he shall in a few stoundis
 Lefe all his markes and his poundis.

I shall him make his pens out fling 3990
 But that thei in his garnir spring;
 Our maidins shall eke plucke him so
 That him shall nedin fethirs mo,
 And make him sell his londe to spende
 But he the bet conne him defende. 3995

Pore men han made ther lorde of me;
 Although thei nat so mightie be
 That thei maie fede me in delite
 I woll not have 'hem in dispite:

5975 No gode man hateth 'hem as I gesse, 6000
For chinche and feloun is Richeffe,
That so can chafe 'hem and dispise,
And 'hem defoule in fondrie wise :

5980 Thei loven full bette, so God me spede, 6005
Than doith the riche chinchy grede,
And ben (in gode faith) more stable,
And truir and more serviable,
And therefore it suffisith me

5985 Ther gode hertis and ther Beaute : 6010
Thei han on me set all ther thought,
And therefore I foryete 'hem nought.

I woll 'hem bring in grete noblesse,
If that I were god of Richeffe,
As I am god of Love sothely,
Soche ruthe upon ther plaint have I; 6015

5990 Therefore I must his succour be 6020
That painith him to servin me,
For if he deied for love of this
Than semeth in me no love there is.

5995 Sir, saied thei, sothe is every dele 6025
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is resonable,

For it is gode and covenable
That ye on riche men han ysworne;
For, Sir, this wote we well beforne, 6035
If riche men doin you homage
That is as solis doen outrage;

But ye shull not forsworne ybe,
 Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie,
 Or piment makid freshe and newe;
 Ladies shull 'hem soche pepir brewe
 If that thei fall into ther laas
 That thei for wo mowe saine Alas!
 Ladies shullen ere so curteis be
 That thei shall quite your othe all fre;
 Ne seketh nevir othir vicaire,
 For thei shall speke with 'hem so faire
 That ye shall holde you paied full wele,
 Though ye you medle nere a dele.
 Let ladies worchin with ther thinges,
 Thei shall 'hem tell so fele tidinges,
 And move so many requestis,
 By flatterie, that not honest is,
 And thereto yeve 'hem soche thankinges,
 What with kissing and with talkinges,
 That certis if thei trowid be
 Shall nevir leve 'hem londe ne fe
 That it n'ill as the moeble fare,
 Of whiche thei first delivered are.
 Now maie you tell us all your will,
 And we your hestis shall fulfill.

But Falso Semblant dare not for drede
 Of you, Sir, medle' him of this dede,

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For he saith that ye ben his so,
 He n'ot if ye woll worche him wo; 6055
 Wherefore we praie you all, beau Sire,
 That ye foryeve him now your ire,
 And that he maie dwell as your man
 With Abstinence his dere lemmian :
 This our accorde and our will now. 6060

Parfei, saied Love, I graunt it you
 I woll well holde him for my man;
 Now let him come : and he forthe ran.

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) in this wiſe
 I take the here to my ſervice, 6065
 That thou our frendis helpe alwaie,
 And hindre 'hem neithir night ne daie,
 But doe thy might 'hem to releve,
 And eke our en'emies that thou greve :
 Thine be this might ; I graunt it the ; 6070
 My king of Harlotes ſhalt thou be :
 We woll that thou have ſoche honour :
 Certain thou art a falſe traitour,
 And eke a thief ; ſithe thou were borne
 A thouſande times thou art forſworne : 6075
 But nathelleſſe in our hering,
 To put our folke out of doubting,
 I bidde the teche 'hem, woſt thou how ?
 By ſome genèrall ſignè now,
 In what place thou ſhalt foundin be 6080
 If that men had miſtir of the,

And how men shall the best espie,
 For the to knowe is grete maistrie :
 Tell in what place is thine haunting.

Sir, I have fully divers wonning 608j

That I kepe not reherfid be,
 So that ye would respitin me,
 For if that I tell you the sothe
 I maie have harme and shamè bothe :

If that my felowes wistin it 609o

My talis shouldin me be quit,
 For certaine thei would hatè me

If er I knewe ther cruelte,
 For thei would ore all hold 'hem still

Of trothe that is again ther will : 609j

Soche talis kepin thei not here ;
 I might eftfone buie it full dere

If I saied of 'hem any thing

That displesith to ther hering,

For what worde that 'hem pricketh or biteth 610o

In that worde none of 'hem deliteth,

All were it gospels the' Evangile,

That would reprove 'hem of ther gile,

For thei are cruill and hautain ;

And this thing wote I well certain, 610j

If I speke ought to paire or loos

Your courte shall not so well be cloos

That thei ne shall wite it at last :

Of gode men am I nought agast,

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For thei woll taken on 'hem nothing 6110

Whan that thei knowe all my mening,

But he that woll it on him take

He woll himself suspicious make

That he his life let covirtly

In Gile and in Ypocrisie, 6115

That me' engendrid and yave fostring.

Thei made a full gode engendring,

(Quod Love) for who so sothly tell

Thei engendrid the divell of hell.

But nedely, howsoere it be, 6120

(Quod Love) I will and chargè the

To tell anon thy wonning placis

Hering eche wight that in this place is,

And what life thou livist also,

Hide it no lengir now; whereto? 6125

Thou must discovre' all thy worching,

How thou servist, and of what thing,

Though that thou shouldest for thy soth-saw

Ben all to-betin and to-drawe,

And yet art thou not wont parde; 6130

But nathelesse though thou betin be

Thou shalt not be the first that so

Hath for sothfawe ysuffrid wo.

Sir, sithe that it maie likin you,

Though that I should be slain right now, 6135

I shall doen your commaundement,

For thereto have I grete talent.

Withoutin wordis mo right than
 Falso Semblant his sermon began,
 And saied 'hem thus in audience : 6140

Barons, take hede of my sentence.
 That wight that list to have knowing
 Of Falso Semblant, full of flatt'ring,
 He must in worldly folke him seke,
 And certis in the cloistirs eke ; 6145

I won no where but in 'hem twaie,
 But not like evin, sothe to saie :
 Shortly, I woll herberowe me
 There I hope best to hulfirid be ;
 And certainly sikereft hiding 6150
 Is undirneath humblift clothing.

Religious folke ben full covert,
 Seculer folke ben more appert ;
 But nathelleffe I woll not blame
 Religious folke, ne 'hem diffame, 6155
 In what habite that er thei go ;
 Religion humble' and true also
 Woll I not blamin ne dispise,
 But I n'ill love it in no wise ;
 I mene of false religious, 6160
 That stout ben and malicious,
 That wollin in an habite go
 And settin not ther herte therto.

Religious folke ben all pitous,
 Thou shalt not sene one dispitous ; 6165

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140 Thei lovin no pride ne no strife,
 But humbly thei woll lede ther life,
 With whiche folke woll I nevyr be,
 And if I dwell I fainè me
 I maie well in ther habite go; 6170
 But me were lever my necke a two
 Than let a purpose that I take,
 145 What covènaunt that er I make.

I dwell with 'hem that proude ybe,
 And full of wiles and subtilte, 6175
 That worship of this worlde coveiten,
 And gretè nede connin expleiten,
 150 And gon and gadrin grete pitaunces,
 And purchase 'hem the acqueintaunces
 Of men that mightie life maie leden, 6180
 And faine 'hem pore, and 'hem self feden
 With gode morcils delicious,
 155 And drinkin gode wine precious,
 And preche us povert and distresse,
 And fishin 'hem self grete riches 6185
 With wily nettis that thei cast :
 It woll come foule out at the last.

160 Thei ben fro clene religion went ;
 Thei make the worlde an argument
 That hath a foule conclusion : 6190
 I have a robe of religion,
 Than am I all religious ;
 This argument is all roignous ;

It is not worth a crokid brere :
 Habite ne makith monke ne frere,
 But clene life and devocion
 Makith gode men of religion.

Nathèlesse there can none answere,
 How high that er his hedde he shere
 With rasour whettid nere so kene,
 That gile in braunchis cutte thurtene,
 There can no wight distinct it so
 That he dare saie a word thereto.

But what herb'row that ere I take,
 Or what semblaunt that er I make,
 I mene but gile, and folowe that,
 For right no more than Gibbe our cat
 (That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
 Ne entende I but to begilen :
 Ne no wight maie by my clothing
 Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
 Ne by my wordis yet parde,
 So soft and so plefaunt thei be.

Beholde the dedis that I doe,
 But thou be blinde thou oughtist so,
 For varie ther wordes fro ther dede
 Thel thinke on gile withoutin drede,
 What manir clothing that thei were,
 Or what estate that er thei bere,
 Lerid er leude, lorde or ladie,
 Knight, squier, burgeis, or bailie.

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Right thus while Falso Semblant sermoneth

6195 Est sonis Love him aresoneth,
And brake his tale in his speking
As though he had him tolde lesing, 6225
And said, What devill is that I here?
What folke hast thou us nempnid here?

6200 Maie men findin religioun
In worldly habitacioun?
Ye, Sir, it foloweth nat that thei 6230

Should lede a wickid life parfei,
Ne not therefore ther foulis lese
6205 That 'hem to worldly clothis chese,
For certis it were grete pite;
Men maie in seculer clothes fe 6235

Florishin holy religioun
Full many' a sainct in felde and toun,
6210 With many' a virgine glorious,
Devoute and full religious,
Han died that commin clothe aie beren, 6240

Yet sainctis nerthelesse thei weren :
I could reckin you many a ten,
6215 Ye, welnigh all these holy women
That men in churchis herry' and seke,
Bothe maidins and these wivis eke, 6245

That bare ful many' a faire childe here,
Werid alway clothis seculere,
6220 And in the same clothes didin they
That faintis weren and ben alway.

The ix thousande maidinis dere, 6250
 That beren in heven ther ciergis clere,
 Of whiche men rede in churche and sing,
 Were take in seculer clothing,
 Whan thei recevid martirdome,
 And wonnin heven unto ther home. 6255
 Gode hert ymakith the gode thought,
 The clothing yeveth ne revith nought:
 The gode thought and the gode worching
 That maketh the religion flouring;
 There lieth the gode religioun 6260
 Aftir the righte entencioun.

Who so ytoke a wethir's skinne,
 And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne,
 For he shoulde go with lambis white,
 Wenist thou not he would 'hem bite? 6265
 Yes; nerthelesse as he were wode
 He would 'hem wirry', and drinke the blode,
 And wel the rathir 'hem disceve,
 For sithin thei coude nat perceve
 His tregette and his cruilte 6270
 Thei would him folow tho he flie.

If there be wolvis of fuche hewe
 Amongis these apostlis newe,
 Thou, holy churche, thou maiste be wailed;
 Sith that thy cite is assailed 6275

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50 'Through knightis of thine ownè table
God wot thy lordship is doutable:
If thei enforcin it to win
That should defend it fro within
Who might defence ayenst 'hem make? 6280

255 Withoutin stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without displaying of pensell;
And if God n'il done it focour,
But let rennin in this colour, 6285

6260 Thou must thy heftis lettin be;
Than is there nought but yeldè the,
Or yeve 'hem tribute doutilefs,
And holde it of 'hem to have pees:
But gretir harme betidith the 6290

6265 That thei all maistir of it be:
Wel con thei scornin the withall,
By day ystuffin thei the wall,
And al the night thei minin there:
Nay, thou plantin must ellis where 6295
6270 Thine impis if thou wolt frute have;
Abide not there thy selfe to fave.

But now pece; here I turne againe;
I wol no more of this thing faine,
Yf I may passin me hereby, 6300
6275 For I might makin you wery;

But I wol hetin you alway
 To helpe your frendis what I may,
 So thei wollin my company,
 For thei be shent all uttirly; 6305
 But if so fallin that I be
 Oftin with 'hem and thei with me,
 And eke my lemman mote thei serve,
 Or thei shul not my love deserve.
 Forsoth I am a false traitour; 6310
 God judged me for a thefe trechour:
 Forfworne I am, but wel nigh none
 Wote of my gile til it be done.
 Through me hath many' one deth receved
 That my treget ner aperceved, 6315
 And yet receveth, and shal receive,
 That my falsnesse shal nere perceve,
 But who so doth, if he wise be,
 Him is right gode beware of me;
 But so flighe is the perceving 6320
 That al to late comith knowing,
 For Proteus, that coude him chaunge
 In every shappe homely and straunge,
 Coude nevir suche gile ne trefounne
 As I, for I come nere in tounne 6325
 There as I might yknowin be
 Though men me both might here and see:
 Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
 Take one and make an othir straunge;

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Now am I knight, now chastelaine, 6330

Now prelate, and nowe chapelaine,

Now priest, now clerke, and now fostere,

Now am I maistr, now scholere,

Now monke, now chanon, now bailly :

Whatevir mistir manne am I. 6335

Now am I prince, now am I page,

And can by hert ev'ry langage ;

Somtimis am I hore and olde,

Now I am yong, and stout, and bolde,

Now am I Robert, now Robin, 6340

Nôw Frere Minor, now Jacobin :

And with me foloweth my loteby

To done me solace and comp'any,

That hight Dame Abstinence, and raigned

In many a queint arraie fained ; 6345

Right as it commeth to her liking

I fulfill all her desiring.

Somtime a woman's clothe take I,

Now am I a maide, now lady :

Somtime I am religious, 6350

Now like an ankir in an hous :

Somtime am I a prioreffe,

And now a nonne, and now abbeffe,

And go thorough all regiounes

Yfeking all religiounes. 6355

But to what ordir that I' am sworne

I take the strawe and bete the corne :

To jolie folke I enhabite
I aske no more but ther habite.

What wol ye more? in every wise 6365
Right as me list I me disgise.

Wel can I bere me undir wede,
Unlike is my worde to my dede.
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The folke through my priv'ilegis all 6365
That ben in Christendome a live.

I may assoile and I may shrive,
That no prelate may lettin me,
All folke where evir thei found be:
I n'ot no prelate maie done so 6370
But it the Pope be, and no mo,
That madin thilke establisshing:
Now is not this a propre thing?
But were my sleightis aperceved 6374

.....
As I was wont, and wost thou why?
For I did 'hem a tregetry;
But therof yeve I' a litil tale,
I have the filvir and the male.
So have I prechid and eke shriven, 6380
So have I take, so have I yeven,
Through ther foly husbonde and wife,
That I lede right a joly life:
Through simplesse of the prelacie
Thei know not all my tregettrie. 6385

But for as moche as man and wife
 Shuld shew ther parish priest ther life
 Onis a yere, as saith the boke,
 Er any wight his housil toke,
 Than have I privilegis large 6390
 That maie of mochil thing discharge,
 For he may say right thus parde:
 Sir Priest, in shrift I tel it the
 That he to whom that I am shriven
 Hath me assoilid, and me yeven 6395
 Penance sothly for alle my sin
 Whiche that I founde me giltie in;
 Ne I ne' have nevir entencion
 To make double confession,
 Ne reherce este my shrift to the; 6400
 O shrifte is right inough to me;
 This ought the to suffisin wele,
 Ne be not rebell nere a dele,
 For certis though thou haddest it sworne
 I wote no priest ne prelate borne 6405
 That maie to shrift est me constraine,
 And if thei done I wol me plaine,
 For I wote where to plainin wele:
 Thou shalt not streinin me a dele,
 Ne enforce me ne not me trouble 6410
 To makin my confession double:

Ne I have none affection
 'To' have double absolucion;
 The first is right inough to me;
 This lattre' assoiling quite I the: 6415
 I am unbounde; what maist thou finde
 More of my sinnes me to unbinde,
 For he that might hath in his honde
 Of all my finnis me unbounde?
 And if thou wolt me thus constraine, 6420
 That me mote nedis on the plaine,
 There shall no jure imperiall,
 Ne bishop ne officiall,
 Done jugement on me, for I
 Shal gone and plaine me opinly 6425
 Anon to my shriftfathir newe,
 Whiche that hight Frerè Wolfe untrewē,
 And he shal chusin him for me,
 For I trowe he can hampir the;
 But Lord! he would be wrothe withall 6430
 Yf men would him Frere Wolfe ycall,
 For he would have no pacience,
 But done all cruill vengience;
 He would his might done at the left,
 Than nothing spare for Godd'is hest: 6435
 And God so wise be my focour
 But thou yeve me my Saviour
 At Estir, whan it likith me,
 Withoutin presing more on the,

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I wol forth and to him ygone, 6440
And he shal housil me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching ;
I kepe not dele with the nothing.

Thus may he shrive him that forfaketh
His parish priest and to me taketh, 9445
And if the priest wol him refuse
I am full redy him to' accuse,
And him punish and hampir so
That he his churchè shal forgo.

But who so hath in his feling 6450
The consequence of suche shriving
Shal sene that priest maie nere have might
To know the conscience aright
Of him that is undir his cure ;
And this is ayenst holy' scripture, 6455
That biddith every herde honest
Have very knowing of his best ;
But povir folke, that gon by strete,
That have no golde ne summis grete,
Them would I let to ther prelates, 6460
Or let ther priestis know ther states,
For to me right nought yevin thei,
And why it is, for thei ne may.

Thei ben so bare I take no kepe,
But I woll havin the fat shepe ; 6465
Let parish priestis have the lene ;
I yeve not of ther harme a bene :

And if that prelatis grutche it,
 That oughtin wroth be in ther wit
 To lesin ther fat bestis so, 6470
 I shal yeve 'hem a stroke or two,
 So that thei shal lesin with force
 Ye, both ther mitre and ther croce.

Thus jape I 'hem, and have do longe,
 My privilegis ben so strong. 6475

Falſe Semblant would have ſtintid here,
 But Love ne made him no ſuche chere
 That he was wery of his ſawe,
 But for to make him glad and ſawe
 He ſaid, Tell on more ſpecially 6480
 How that thou ſerviſt untruly :

Tel forth, and ſhame the nere a dele,
 For as thine habit ſhewith wele
 Thou ſerveſt an holy heremite.

Sothe is but I' am but an ipocrite. 6485
 Thou goeſt and prechiſt poverté.

Ye, Sir, but Richesse hath poſtè.
 Thou prechiſt abſtinence alſo.

Sir, I woll fillen, ſo mote I go,
 My paunche of gode mete and gode wine, 6490
 As ſhould a maiſtir of divine,
 For how that I me povir ſaine
 Yet al povir folke I diſdaine.

I love bettir the acquaintance
 Ten timis of the King of Fraunce 6495
 Than of a pore man of milde mode
 Though that his soule be all so gode,
 For whan I se beggirs quaking,
 Nakid on mixins all stinking,
 For hungre crie and eke for care, 6500
 I entremet not of ther fare;
 Thei ben so pore and ful of pine
 Thei might not ones yeve me a dine,
 For thei have nothing but ther life;
What shoulde be yeve that licketh his knife? 6505
 It is but foly to' entremete
 To seke in hound'is nest fat mete:
 Let bere him to the spittle' anone,
 But for me comfort get thei none:
 But a full riche sicke usurere 6510
 Would I visitin and drawe nere;
 Him would I comfote and rehetē,
 For I hope of his golde to gete,
 And if that wickid Deth him have
 I woll go with him in his grave: 6515
 And if there any reprove me
 Why that I let the povir be,
 Wost thou how I know how to' ascape?
 I say and swerin him full rape

That richè men han more tetchis 6520
 Of sinne than han these pore wretchis,
 And han of counsaile more mistere,
 And therefore I would drawe 'hem nere:
 But as gret hurt, it maie so be,
 Hath soule in right grete poverte 6525
 As soule in grete richeffe forsothe,
 Al be it that thei hurtin bothe,
 For richeffe and mendicitees
 Bene clepid two extremitees,
 The mene is clepid Suffisaunce, 6530
 There lieth of vertue the' aboundaunce.

For Salomon, full wel I wote,
 In his wise Parablis us wrote,
 As it is knowen of many' a wight,
 In his thirtieth chapitir right, 6535
 God thou me kepe for thy postè
 Fro richeffe and mendicite,
 For if a richè man him dresse
 To thinkin to moche on richeffe
 His hert on that so ferre is sette 6540
 That he' his Creatour doth foryette,
 And him that beggith woll aie greve;
 How should I by his worde him leve,
 Unneth that he n'is a micher
 Forfworne, or els Godd'is lier? 6545
 Thus sayith Salomon'is fawes.

Ne we find writtin in no lawes,

520 And namely in our Christin laie,
Who so faith ye I dare say naie,
That Christ ne his apostils dere, 6550
While that thei walkid in erth here,
Were nevir sene herbrid begging,
525 For they n'olde beggin for nothing.

And right thus were men wont to teche,
And in this wise wouldin it preche 6555
The maistirs of divinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

6530 And if men would there gaine appose
The nakid texte and let the glose,
It mightin sone assoilid be, 6560
For men may wel the sothe yse
6535 That pardie thei might aske a thing
Plainly forth withoutin begging,
For they weren Godd'is herdis dere,
And cure of foulis haddin here, 6565
Thei ne wolde nothing begge ther fode,
6540 For astir Christ was done on rode
With ther propir hondis thei wrought,
And with traveile, and ellis nought,
Thei wonnin al ther sustinaunce, 6570
And lividin forth in ther penaunce,
6545 And the remenaunt yaf awaie
To othir pore folkis alwaie.

Thei neithir bildin toure ne hall,
But thei in housis smal with alle.

6573

A mighty man, that can and maie,
Should with his honde and body' alwaie
Winne him his fode in labouring,
Yf he ne' have rent or suche a thing:
Although he be religious,
And God to servin curious,
Thus mote he done or do trespas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can telle if mistir be
Right wel whan that the time I se.

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6585

Seke the boke of Saincte Augustine,
Be it in papir or perchemene,
There as he writte of these worchinges,
Thou shalt sene that none excusinges
A perfite man ne should yseke
By wordis ne by dedis eke,
Although he be religious
And God to servin curious,
That he ne shal, so mote I go,
With propir hondes and body' also
Yget his fode in laboring,
Yf he ne' have properte of thing,
Yet should he fel all his sustaunce,
And with his swinke have sustinaunce,
If he be parfite in bounte;
Thus han the bokis toldè me :

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For he that wol gone idilly,
 And usith it aie besily
 To hauntin othir menn'is table,
 He is a trechour full of fable, 6605
 Ne he ne maie by gode refon
 Excuse him by his orison,
 For men behovith in some gise
 Ben somtime out of God's servise,
 To gon and purchasin ther nede. 6610

Men mote etin, that is no drede,
 And slepe, and eke do othir thing,
 And so long may thei leve praying.

So may they eke ther praiere blinne
 While that thei werke, ther mete to winne; 6615
 Seint Austen wol therto accorde
 In thilkè boke that I recorde.

Justinian eke, that made lawes,
 Hath thus forbodin by olde sawes.

No man, up paine for to be ded, 6620
 Mighty' of body, to begge his bred
 Yf he may swinke it for to gete;
 Men should him rathir maime or bete,
 Or done of him aperte justice,
 Than suffrin him in fuche malice. 6625

Thei done not wel, so mote I go,
 Whiche that takin fuche almesse so,
 But if thei have some privilege
 That of the paine 'hem woll alege.

But how that is can I not fe
 But if the prince discevid be;
 Ne I ne wene not sikirly
 That thei maie have it rightfully.

6630

But yet I wol not determine
 Of princis powir ne define,
 Ne by my worde compre'hende iwis,
 Yf it so ferre may stretche in this;
 I wol not entremete a dele
 But I trowe that the boke saith wele,
 Who that taketh almeffis that be
 Dewe to folke that men may yfe
 Lame and feble, wery and bare,
 Povir, or in suche manir care,
 That con winnin' hem nevir mo,
 For thei havin no power therto,
 He etith his ownè dampning,
 But if he lie that made al thing;
 And if ye suche a truaunt finde
 Chastise him wel if ye be kinde;
 But thei would hatin you parcaas
 If that ye fillin in ther laas.

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Thei would eftsonis do you scathe,
 If that thei mightin, late or rathe,
 For thei be not ful pacient
 That han the worlde thus foule yblent:
 And wetith wel that God ybad
 The gode man sell al that he had

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530 And folowe' him, and to pore it yeve;
He would not therfore that he live
To servin him in mendience, 6660
For it was nevir his sentence,
But he bad werke whan that nede is,
635 And folowe him in gode dedis.

Saint Poule, that loved al holy church,
He bade the' apostils for to wurch, 6665
And winne ther livelode in that wise,
And 'hem defendid truandise,
6640 And sayid, Werkith with your honden:
'Thus should the thing be understonden.

He n'olde iwis have bid 'hem begging, 6670
Ne fellin gospels ne preching,
Lest thei berafte with ther asking
6645 Folke of ther cattle' or of ther thing.

For in this world is many' a man
That yeveth his gode, for he ne can 6675
Werne it for shame, or ellis he
Would of the' askir delivered be,
6650 And for he him encombrith so
He yeveth him gode to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite; 6680
Thei lese the yeste and the merite.

The gode folke that St. Poule to preched
6655 Profrid him ofte, whan he 'hem teched,
Some of ther gode in charite,
But therof right nothing toke he, 6685

But of his hondis would he gette
Clothis to wrine him, and his mete.

Tel me than how a man may liven
That al his gode to pore hath yeven,
And wol but onely bidde his bedes, 6690
And ner with hondes labour his nedes.
May he do so? Ye, Sir. And howe?
Sir, I woll gladly tellin you.
Saint Austyn saith, A man may be
In housis that han properte, 6695
As Templers and Hospitèlers,
And as thes Chanons Regulers,
Or thes White Monkis, or thes Blake,
I wol no mo ensamplis make,
And take thereof his susteining, 6700
For therin lyith no begging,
But othirwayis not iwis,
Yet Austyn gabbith not of this;
And yet ful many' a monke laboureth
That God in holy church honoureth, 6705
For whan ther swinking is agon
Thei rede and sing in church anone.

And for there hath ben grete discorde
As many' a wight may bere recorde,
Upon the' estate of mendicience, 6710
I wol shortely in your presence

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Tel how a man maie begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede,
Maugre his felowis janglinges,
For sothfastnes wol none hidinges, 6715
And yet percase I may obey,
That I to you sothly thus sey.

Lo, here the case especiall:
If a man be so bestiall
That he of no crasfte hath science, 6720
And nought desirith ignorance,
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he some othir crasfte can lerne,
Through whiche withoutin truanding
He may in trouthe have his living: 6725

Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or sickenesse, or langour,
Or for his tendir age also,
Than may he yet a begging go:
Or if he have peravinture 6730

Through usage of his noriture
Livid ovir delicioufly,
Than oughtin gode folke cominly
Han of his mischefe some pite,
And fuffrin him also that he 6735
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for hongir ded:

Or if he have of crafte conning,
 And strength also and desiring
 For to worchin, as he had what, 6740
 But he finde neithir this ne that,
 Than may he beggin till that he
 Have gettin his neceffite :

Or if his winning be so lite
 That his labour will not aquite 6745
 Sufficiauntly al his living
 Yet may he go his brede begging,
 Fro dore to dore he may go trace
 Till he the remnaunt may purchase :

Or if a man would undirtake 6750
 Any emprise for to ymake
 In the rescous of our lay,
 And it defendin as he may,
 Be it with armis or lettrure,
 Or othir convenable cure, 6755
 If it be so that he pore be
 Than may he beggin til that he
 Maie findin in trouth for to swinke,
 And get him clothis, mete, and drinke,
 Swinke he with his hondes corporel, 6760
 And not with hondes espirituel.

In all this case, and in semblables,
 If that there ben mo resonables,

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He maie begge as I tell you here,
And ellis not in no manere, 6765
As William Saint Amour would preche,
And oftin would dispute and teche
Of this matir all opinly
At Paris fully' and solemply;
And all so God my soule bleffe 6770
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The' acorde of the' Universite,
And of the peple', as semith me.

No gode man ought it to refuse,
Ne ought him thereof to excuse, 6775
Be wrothe or blithe, who so thou be,
For I wol speke and tell it the
Al should I die and be put down,
As was Saint Poule, in derke prisoun,
Or be exilid in this caas 6780
With wrong, as Maistir William was,
That my mothir Hypocrisie
Banished for her gret envie.

My mothir flemed him Saint Amour:
This noble man did suche labour 6785
To susteine er the loialte,
That he to mucche agiltè me:
He made a boke and let it write,
Wherin his life he did all dite,
And would that eche renied begging, 6790
And livin by my traveiling,

If I ne' had rent ne othir gode;
 What! wenith he that I were wode?
 For labour might me nevir plese,
 I have more will to ben at ese,
 And have well levir, sothe to saie,
 Before the peple pattr' and praie,
 And wrie me in my foxerie
 Undir a cope of papelardie.

(Quod Love) What divel is this I here?
 What wordis tellist thou me here?
 What, Sir? Why Falleneffe that apert is.
 Than dredist thou not God? No, certis;
 For selde in grete thing shal he spede
 In this world that God wol ydrede,
 For folke that 'hem to vertue yeven,
 And truily on ther owne liven,
 And 'hem in godnesse aie contente,
 On 'hem is litil thrifte isente:
 Suche folke ydrinkin grete misese;
 That life ne may me nevir plese.

But se what golde han userers,
 And filvir eke, in ther garners!
 Tailagiers, and these moniours,
 Bailiffes, bedils, provostes, countours,
 These livin well nigh by ravine;
 The smale peple 'hem mote encline,
 And thei as wolvis wol 'hem eten;
 Upon the povir folke thei geten

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Ful muche of that thei spende or kepe; 6820

N'is none of 'hem that thei n'il strepe,

And wrine 'hem selvin well at full;

Withoutin scalding thei 'hem pull:

The strong the feble ovirgothe,

But I that were my simple clothe 6825

Robbe bothe the robbid and robbours,

And gile the gilid and gilours;

By my treget I gathre' and threste

The grete trefour into my cheste,

That lieth with me so faste ybounde; 6830

Thus myn high paleis do I founde,

And my delitis I fulfyll

With wine at festis at my will,

And tablis ful of entremees:

I wol no life but ese and pees, 6835

And winnin golde to spende also,

For whan the grete bagge is ago

It comith full right with my japes,

Make I not wel romble mine apes?

To winnen is alwaie mine entent; 6840

My purchase' is bettir than my rent;

For though that I should betin be

Ovir al I entremet me:

Withoutin me maie no wight dure;

I walkin soulis for to cure: 6845

Of all the world the cure have I

In brede and eke in length; boldly

I wol bothe preche and eke counsaillen :
 With hondis wol I not travaillen,
 For of the Pope I have the bull ; 6850
 I ne holde not my wittis dull :
 I wol not flintin in my live
 These emperouris for to shrive,
 Or kingis, dukes, and lordis grete,
 But povir folke al quite I lete : 6855
 I love no fuche shriving parde
 But it for othir cause ybe :
 I recke not of these povir men ;
 Ther estate is not worthe an hen.
 Wher findeest thou 'a swinkir of labour 6860
 Have me to be his confessoure ?
 But empreffis and ducheffis,
 These quenis and eke countessis,
 These abbeffis and eke bigins,
 And these grete ladies palasins, 6865
 These joly knightis and bailives,
 These nonnis and these burgeis wives,
 That riche yben and eke plesing,
 And these maidinis welfaring,
 Where so thei clad or nakid be, 6870
 Uncounsailed goeth there none fro me ;
 And for ther foulis favite
 At lorde and lady', and ther meine,
 I aske, whan thei 'hem to me shrive,
 The propertie of al ther live, 6875

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And make 'hem trowe, both moste and lest,
 Ther parish priest is but a best
 Ayens me and my company,
 That shrewis ben as gret as I,
 Fro whiche I wol not hide in holde 6880
 No privity that me is tolde,
 That I by worde or signe iwis
 Ne wol make 'hem know what it is,
 And thei wollen also tellin me
 Thei hele fro me no privity; 6885
 And for to make you them perceiven
 That usin folke thus to deceiven,
 I wol you faine withoutin drede
 What men maie in the Gospell rede
 Of Sainct Mathewe the gospellere, 6890
 That saith as I shall you saie here.

Upon the chairè of Moses
 Thus it is glosid doutlefs,
 (That is, The Oldè Testament,
 For thereby is the chairè ment) 6895
 Sittin Scribis and Pharisen,
 That is to faine, the cursid men,
 Whiche that we Ipocritis call;
 Doeth that thei preche I rede you all;
 But doeth not as thei doen a dele 6900
 That ben not werie to saie wele,

But to doe well no will have thei,
 And thei would binde on folke alwaie,
 That ben to be begilid able,
 Burdons that ben importable; 6905
 On folkis shouldirs thinges thei couchen,
 That thei n'ill with ther fingirs touchen;
 And why woll thei not touch it? why!
 For them ne liste nat fikiranly,
 For the sadde burdons that men taken 6910
 Ymakin folkis shouldirs aken.

And if thei doe ought that gode be
 That is for folke it shouldin se;
 Ther burdons largir makin thei,
 And makin ther hemmes wide alwaie, 6915
 And lovin fetis at the table
 The first and the moste honourable;
 And for to han the first chairis
 In sinagogges to 'hem full dere is,
 And willen that folke 'hem loute and grete 6920
 Whan that thei passin through the strete,
 And wollen be cleped Maistir also;
 But thei ne should not willin so,
 The Gospell' is there ayenst I gesse,
 That shewith well ther wickidnesse. 6925

An othir custome usin we;
 Of 'hem that woll ayenst us be
 We hate him dedly everychone,
 And we woll werrey him as one:

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Him that one hatith hate we all, 6930

And coniecte how to doen him fall;

And if we sene him winne honour,

Richeffe or preise, through his valour,

Provende or rent, or dignite,

Full faste iwis compassin we 6935

By what laddre' he is clombin so;

And for to make him doune to go

With traifon we woll him defame,

And doen him lesin his gode name.

Thus from his laddir we him take, 6940

And thus his frendis foes we make,

But worde ne wetin shall he none

Till al his frendis ben his sone;

For if we did it opinly

We mightin have blame redily, 6945

For had he wiste of our malice

He had him kept but he were nice.

An othir' is this, that if so fall

That there be one emong us all

That doeth a gode tourne, out of drede 6950

We faine it is our aldir dede,

Ye, sikirly though he it fained,

Or that him lifte or that him dained

A man through him avauncid be,

Thereof all partineres be we, 6955

And tellin folke where so we go

That man through us is sprongin so.

And for to have of men praising
 We purchase through our flattering
 Of richè men of grete poste 6960
 Lettirs to witnesse our bounte,
 So that man weneth that maie us se
 That allè vertue in us be.

And alwaie povir we us fain,
 But how so that we begge or plain 6965
 We ben the folke without lesing,
That all thing have without having.

Thus be dradde of the peple' iwis,
 And gladly my purpose is this:
 I delin with no wight but he 6970

Have golde and tresour grete plente;
 Ther acquaintaunce well lovin I:
 This moche is my desire shortly;
 I entremete me of brocages,
 I makin pece and mariages, 6975
 I am gladly executour,
 And many times a procuratour,
 I am sometime a messagere,
 That fallith not to my mistere.

And many timis I make enquest, 6980
 For me that office is nat honest;
 To dele with othir mennis thing
 That is to me a grete liking;
 And if that ye have ought to doe
 In place that I repairin to 6985

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I shall it spedin through my witte

As fone as ye have told me it :

So that ye servin me to paie

My service shall be yours alwaie.

But who so woll chastise me

6990

Anone my love ylosse hath he,

For I love no man in no gise

That woll me reprove or chastise,

But I woll all folke undirtake,

And of no wight no teching take ;

6995

For I that othir folke chastie

Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I ne love none hermitage more ;

Al desertis and holtis hore,

And grete wodis evèrichone

7000

I let 'hem to the Baptist John ;

I queth him quite, and him releffe,

Of Egypt all the wildirnesse :

To ferre were all my mansiouns

Fro allè citees and gode touns.

7005

My paleis and mine house make I

There men maie renne in opinly,

And saie that I the worlde forsake ;

But all amidde I builde and make

My house, and swimme and plaie therein

7010

Bette than a fishe doth with his finne.

Of Antichrist's men am I
 Of whiche that Christ saieth opynly
 Thei have habite of holinesse,
 And livin in soche wickidnesse.

7015

All outward lambin sein we,
 Full of godenesse and of pite,
 And inwarde we withoutin fable
 Ben gredy wolvis ravisable.

We envircoun bothe londe and se;
 With all the worlde werryin we:
 We woll ordain of allè thing,
 Of folkis gode and ther living.

7020

If there be castill or cite
 Within that any bougerons be,
 Although that thei of Millaine were,
 For thereof ben thei blamid there;

7025

Or if a wight out of mesure
 Would lene ther gold and take usure,
 For that he is so coveitous,

7030

Or if he be to lechirous,
 Or these that hauntin simonie,
 Or provost full of trechirie,
 Or prelate living jolilie,
 Or priest that halt his quein him by,
 Or oldè whoris hostilers,
 Or othir baudes or bordillers,

7035

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Or ellis blamed of any vice,
Of whiche men shouldin doen justice;

By all the sainctis that we preie, 7040

But thei defende them with lampreie,

With luce, with elis, with samons,

With tendir gees and with capons,

With tartis or with cheffis fat,

With deinte flaunis brode and flat, 7045

With caleweis or with pullaile,

With coninges or with fine vitaile,

That we undir our clothis wide

Ymakin through our golet glide,

Or but he woll doe come in haste 7050

Rae venison ybake in paste,

Whethir so that he loure or groine

He shall have of a corde a loigne,

With whiche men shall him binde and lede

To brenne him for his sinfull dede, 7055

That men shull here him crie and rore

A mil'is waie about and more,

Or els he shall in prison die

But if he woll his frendship buie,

Or smertin that that he hath doe 7060

More than his gilt amountith to.

But and he couthe thorough his sleight

Doe makin up a toure of height,

Nought rought I wher of stone or tre,

Or yerth or turvis, though it be, 7065

Though it were of no voundè stone
 Ywrought with square and scantilone,
 So that the toure were stuffid well
 With allè richis temporell;

And than that he would him up dresse
 Enginis bothè more and lesse,
 To caste at us by every side,
 To berin his gode namè wide.

Soche sleightis I shullin you yeven,
 Barelles of wine by fixe or seven,
 Or golde in sackis grete plente,
 He should though sone delivered be;
 And if he have no suche pitences
 Let him studie' in equipolences,
 And lerin lies and fallaces,
 If that he would deserve our graces,
 Or we shall bere him soche witnesse
 Of sinne and of his wretchidnesse,
 And doen his lose so widè renne,
 That all quicke we shouldin him brenne,
 Or ellis yeve him soche penaunce
 That is well worfe than the pitaunce.

For thou shalt nevir for nothing
 Con knowen aright by ther clothing
 The traitours full of trechèrie
 But thou ther werkis can espie.

And ne had the gode keping be
 Whilom of the' Univerlite,

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That kepeth the kei of Christendome,
We' had ben tourmentid all and some. 7095

Soche ben the stinking Prophetis;
N'is none of 'hem that gode prophete is,

For thei through wickid entencion,
The yere of the' incarnation

A thousande and two hundrid yere 7100

Five-and-fifte, ferther ne nere,

Broughtin a boke with forie grace,

To yeven ensample in common place,

That sayid thus, though it were fable,

This the Gospell pardurable 7105

That fro the Holie Ghost is sent:

Well were it worthy to be ybrent.

Entitlid was in soche manere

This boke of whiche I tell here,

There n'as no wight in al Paris 7110

Before our Ladie at parvis

That thei ne might the bokè by;

The sentence plesed 'hem well truely.

To' the copie if him talent toke

Of the Evangelist'is boke, 7115

There might he se by grete traifoun

Full many' a false comparifoun.

As moche as thorough his grete might,

Be it of hete be it of light,

The sunne ysurmountith the mone, 7120

That troublir is, and chaungith sone,

And the nutte kerneill dothe the shell;
 I skorne nat that I you it tell,
 Right so withoutin any gile
 Surmountith this noble' Evangile: 7125
 The worde of any' evangelist,
 And to ther title thei toke Christ.
 And many soche comparisoun,
 Of whiche I make no mencion,
 Mightin men in that boke finde, 7130
 Who so could of 'hem havin minde.

The' Uni'versite, that was a slepe,
 Gan for to braied, and takin kepe,
 And at the noise the hedde up cast,
 Ne nevir sithen slept it fast, 7135
 But up it stert, and armis toke
 Ayenst this false horrible boke,
 All redy battaile for to make,
 And to the judge the boke thei take.

But thei that broughtin the boke there 7140
 Hent it anone awaie for fere;
 Thei n'old shewe it no more a dele,
 But than it kept, and kepin wele,
 Till soche a time that thei maie se
 That thei so strong ywoxin be 7145
 That no wight maie 'hem well withstonde,
 For by that boke thei durst not stonde:
 Awaie thei gonne it for to bere,
 For thei ne durstin not answe're

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By expoficion ne glofe 7150
 To that that clerkis woll appofe
 Aycnft the curfidneffe iwis
 That in that boke ywrittin is.

Now wotte I nat ne can nat fe
 What manir ende that there fhall be 7155
 Of all this whiche that thei yhide,
 But yet algate thei fhall abide
 Till that thei maie it bette defende;
 This trowe I beft woll be ther ende.

Thus Antichrift abidin we, 7160
 For we ben all of his meine,
 And what man that woll not be fo
 Right fone he fhall his life forgo:
 We woll a peple' on him arife,
 And through our gile doin him ceife, 7165
 And him on sharpe fperis rive,
 Or othir waies bring him fro live,
 But if that he woll folowe' iwis
 That in our boke ywrittin is.

Thus moche woll our boke fignifie, 7170
 That while Peter had maiftirie
 Maie nevir John shewe well his might.

Now have I you declarid right
 The mening of the barke and rinde
 That makith the entencions blinde; 7175

But now at erst I woll begin
 To expounē you the pithe within,
 And the seculers comprehendē
 That Christ'is lawe wollin defende,
 And should it kepin and maintenē
 Ayenist them that all sustenen, 7180
 And falsly to the peple techen
 That John betokeneth 'hem to prechen
 That there n'is lawe covenable
 But thilke Gospell pardurable 7185
 That fro the Holy Ghost was sent
 To tournin folke that ben miswent.

The strengthe of John thei undirstonde
 The grace in whiche thei saie thei stonde,
 That doeth the sinfull folke convert, 7190
 And 'hem to Jesu Christ revert:
 Full many'an othre' horriblete
 Mowin men in that bokè se,
 That ben commaundid doutilefs
 Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse, 7195
 And all with Antichrist thei holden,
 As men maie in the boke beholden.

And than commaundin thei to flee
 All tho that with Peter yben;
 But thei shall nevir have that might,
 And God to forpe, for strief to fight,
 That thei ne shall ynough yfinde
 That Peter's lawe shall have in minde,

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And evir holde and so maintene,
 That at the last it shall be sene 7205
 That thei shall all comin thereto
 For aught that thei can speke or do.

And thilkè lawe ne shall not stonde
 That thei by John have undirstonde,
 But maugre them it shall adoun, 7210
 And ben brought to confusio.

But I woll stint of this matere,
 For it is wondir long to here ;
 But had that ilkè boke endured
 Of better' estate I were ensured, 7215
 And frendis have I yet parde
 That han me set in grete degre.

Of all this worlde is emperour
 Gile my fathir, the false trechour,
 And empereffe my mothir is, 7220
 Maugre the Holie Ghoſte iwis.
 Our mightie linage and our rout
 Reignith in every reigne about,
 And well' is worthy we mini'sters be,
 For all this worldè governe we, 7225
 And can the folke so well deceve
 That none our gilis can perceive,
 And though thei doen thei dare not saie ;
 The sothe dare no wight bewraie.

But he in Christ'is wrathe him ledeth 7230
 That more than Christ my brethrin dredeth;
 He n'is no full gode champion
 That dredeth soche similacion,
 Nor that for pain woll refusin
 Us to correte and accusin. 7235

He woll not entremete by right,
 Ne havin God in his eyen sight,
 And therefore God shall him punice:
 But me ne reckith of no vice
 Sithen men us loven communable, 7240
 And holdin us for so worthie,
 That we maie folke repreve echone,
 And we n'll have represe of none:
 Whom shouldin folke worshipin so
 But us that stintin nevir mo 7245
 To patrin while that folke maie' us se
 'Though it not so behinde 'hem be?

And where is there more wode folie
 Than to enhauncin chivalrie,
 And lovin noble men and gaie, 7250
 That jolie clothis weren alwaie?
 If thei be soche folke as thei semen,
 So clene as men ther clothis demen,
 And that ther wordes folowe ther dede,
 It is grete pite out of drede 7255
 For thei woll be none hypocritis;
 Of 'hem me thinkith grete spite is:

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I can not love 'hem on no side :

But beggirs with these hodies wide,
 With sleigh and palè facis lene, 7260
 And with graie clothis nat full clene,
 But frettid full of tatar wagges,
 And high shewis knoppid with dagges,
 That frouncin like a qualè pipe,
 Or botis riving as a gipe; 7265

To soche folke, as I you devise,
 Should princis and these lordis wife
 Take all ther landis and ther thinges, 7270
 Eothe warre and pece in govirninges,
 To soche folke should a prince him yeve
 That would his life in honour live.

And if thei be nat as thei seme,
 That servin thus the worlde to queme,
 There would I dwellin to deceive
 The folke, for thei shall nat perceve. 7275

But I ne speke in no soche wise
 That men should humble' habite dispise;
 So that no pride there undir be
 No man should hate, as thinkith me, 7280
 The povir man in soche clothing;
 But God ne presith him nothing
 That saieth he hath the worlde forsake,
 And hath to worldly glory' him take,
 And woll of soche delicis use;
 Who maie that beggir well excuse? 7285

That papelarde that him yeldith so,
And woll to worldly ese ygo,
And saieth that he the worlde hath left,
And gredily it gripith eft,
He is the hounde, shame is to fain,
That to his casting goeth again.

7290

But unto you dare I not lie,
But might I felin or espie
That ye percevid it nothing
Ye shouldin have a starke lesing:
Right in your honde thus to beginne,
I ne wolde it let for no sinne.
The god lough at the wondir tho,
And every wight gan laugh also,
And sayid, Lo, here a man right
For to be trustie to' every wight!

7295

7300

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) ſaie to me,
Sith I thus have avauncid the,
'That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of Ribaudes ſhalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holdin my forwardes?

7305

Ye, Sir, quod he, from hens forwardes
Had ner your fathir here beforne
Servaunt ſo true ſithe he was borne.
That is ayeniſt all nature.

7310

Sir, put you in that avinture,

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For though ye borowes take of me
 The likerer shall ye nevir be
 For hostagis ne sikirnesse
 Or chartris for to bere witnesse : 7315

I take your self to recorde here
 That men ne maie in no manere
 Terin the wolfe out of his hide
 Till he be slain bothe backe and side,
 Though men him bete and all defile : 7320
 What! wene ye that I woll begile?

For I am clothid mekily
 There undre' is all my trechiry;
 Mine herte chaungith nevir the mo
 For none habite in which I go : 7325

Though I have chere of simplenesse
 I am not werie of shreudnesse :
 My lemman, strainid Abstenaunce,
 Hath mistir of my purveiaunce,
 She had full long ago be dedde 7330
 N'ere for my counsaile and my redde:
 Let her alone, and you and me.

And Love answèrid, I trust the
 Without borowe, for I woll none.

And Falso Semblant the thefe anone 7335
 Right in that ilkè samè place,
 That had of trefon all his face
 Right blacke within and white without,
 Thanking him gan on his knees lout.

Than was there nought but every man 7340
 Now to assaute that failin can,
 (Quod Love) and that full hardily :
 Than armid thei 'hem cominly
 Of soche armour as to 'hem fell.
 Whan thei were armid fiers and fell 7345
 Thei went 'hem forthe all in a rout
 And set the castill all about ;
 Thei will not awaie for no drede
 Till it so be that thei ben dede,
 Or till thei have the castill take. 7350
 And four battellis gan thei make,
 And partid 'hem in foure anone,
 And toke ther waie, and forthe thei gone
 The foure gatis for to assaile,
 Of whiche the kepirs woll not faile, 7355
 For thei ben neithir sicke ne dede,
 But hardie folke, and strong in dede.

Now woll I faine the countenaunce
 Of Falso Semblant and Abstinaunce,
 That ben to Wickid Tong ywent; 7360
 But first thei helde ther parliment
 Whethir it to be doin were
 To makin 'hem be knowin there
 Or ellis walkin forthe disgised;
 But at the laste thei devised 7365
 That thei would gone in tapinage,
 As it were in a pilgrimage,

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340 Like gode and holie folke unfeined;
And anon Dame Abstinence streined
Toke on a robe of cameline 7370
And gan her gratche as a bigine.

345 A largè coverchief of threde
She wrappid all about her hede;
But she forgate not her psaltere.

A paire of bedis eke she bere 7375
Upon a lace all of white threde,
On whiche that she her bedis bede;
350 But she ne bought 'hem nevre' a dele,
For thei were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holie frere, 7380
That saied he was her fathir dere,

To whom she had oftiner went
355 Than any frere of his covent;
And he visitid her also,
And many' a sermone saied her to; 7385
He n'olde let for no man on live

That he ne would her oftin thrive,
360 And with so grete devocion
Thei madin her confession
That thei had oftin for the nones 7390
Two heddis in one hode at ones.

Of faire shape I devised her the,
365 But pale of face sometime was she;
That false traitouresse untrewe
Was like that falowe horse of hewe 7395

That in the' Apocalyps is shewed,
 That signifieth tho folke befhrewed
 That ben all full of trecherie,
 And pale thorough hypocrisie;
 For on that horse no colour is
 But onely dedde and pale iwis:
 Of soche a colour enlangoured
 Was Abstinence iwis coloured;
 Of her estate she her repented
 Right as her visage represented.

74C9

74C5

She had a burdoune all of thest
 That Gile had yeve her of his yest,
 And a skrippè of faint distresse,
 That full was of elengènessè,
 And forthe she walkid sobirlic.
 And Falso Semblant saint, *Je vous die*,
 And as it were for soche mistere
 Doin on the cope of a frere,
 With chere simple and full pitous
 His loking was not disdeinous
 Ne proude, but meke and ful pefible.

74D0

74D5

About his necke he bare a Bible,
 And squyirly forthe gan he gon,
 And for to rest his limmes upon
 He had of trefon a potent;
 As he were feble' his waie he went.

74D9

But in his sleve he gan to thring
 A rasour sharpe and well biting,

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'That was yforgid in a forge
Whiche that men clepin Coupè Gorge.

7425

So long forth ther waie thei nomin
Till thei to Wickid l'ong comin,
That at his gate ywas sitting,
And sawe folke in the waie passing.

The pilgrimis sawe he fast by
That berin 'hem full mekily,

7430

And humbly thei with him ymette;
Dame Abstinence first him ygrette,
And sicke him Falso Semblant salved,
And he 'hem, but he not remeved,

7435

For he ne drede him not a dele,
For whan he sawe ther facis wele

Alwaie in hertè him thought to
He should knowin 'hem bothe two,

For well he knewe Dame Abstinaunce,
But he ne knewe not Constreinaunce;

7440

He knewe nat that she was constrained,
Ne of her thev'is life yfained,

But wende she come of will all fre,

But she come in othir degre,

7445

And if of gode will she began

That will ywas failid her than.

And Falso Semblant had he faine alse,

But he knewe nat that he was false;

Yet false was he, but his falsnesse

7450

Ne coud he nat espie nor gesse,

For Semblant was so flie ywrought
 That falsenesse he ne espied nought;
 But haddeſt thou knowin him beſorne
 Thou woldiſt on a boke have ſworne, 7455
 Whan thou him ſawe in thilke araie,
 That he that whilom was ſo gaie,
 And of the daunce Jolie Robin,
 Was tho become a Jacobin:
 But ſothly what ſo men 'hem call 7460
 Frere prechouris ben gode men all;
 Ther ordir wickidly thei beren
 Soche minſtrellis if that thei weren.

So ben Auguſtins and Cordileres,
 And Carmis, and eke ſackid freres, 7465
 And all the freris ſhode and bare,
 Though ſome of 'hem ben gréte and ſquare,
 Full holy men as I 'hem deme;
 Everiche of hem would gode man ſeme;
But ſhalt thou never of apparence 7470
Sein conclude gode conſequence
In any argument iwis,
 If exiſtens all failid is;
 For men maie ſinde alwaie ſopheme
 The conſequence to enveneme, 7475
 Who ſo hath had the ſubtilte
 The double ſentence for to ſe.

Whan the pilgrimis comin were
 To Wickid Tong that dwellid there,

Ther harneis nigh 'hem was algate; 7480
 By Wickid Tong adoune thei fate,
 That badde 'hem nere him for to come,
 And of tidingis tell him some,
 And saied 'hem, What case makith you
 To comin into this place now? 7485

Sir, sayid Strainid Abstinaunce,
 We for to dryin our penaunce
 With hertis pitous and devout
 Are commen as pilgrimes gon about;
 Well nigh on fote alwaie we go; 7490
 Full doughtie ben our helis two,
 And thus bothe we ben ysent
 Throughout the worlde that is miswent
 To yeve ensample and preche also;
 To fishin sinfull men we go, 7495
 For othir fishing ne fishe we:
 And, leve Sir, for that charite,
 As we be wont, erbo'rowe we crave;
 Your life to amenne Christ it save,
 And so it shoulde you not displese 7500
 We wouldin, if it were your ese,
 A short sermon unto you sain.
 And Wickid Tong answered again,
 The house (quod he) soche as ye se
 Shall nat be warnid you for me: 7505

Saie what you list and I woll here.
 Graunt mercie! tho swetè Sir dere,
 Quod aldirfirst Dame Abstinence,
 And thus began she her sentence :

Sir, the first vertue for certaine,
 The gretist and most soveraine
 That maie be founde in any man
 For having or for wit he can
 That is his tong for to refrain;
 Therto ought every wight him pain,
 For it is bettir still to be
 Than for to spekin harme parde,
 And he that harkeneth it gladly
 He is no gode man sikirly.

7510

And, Sir, aboven all othir sinne
 In that art thou most giltie inne;
 Thou spake a jape not long a go,

7515

And, Sir, that was right evill doe.
 Of a yong man that here repaired,
 And nevir yet this place apaired,
 Thou faidest he awaitid nothing
 But to disceve Faire Welcoming:
 Ye saidin nothing sothe of that,
 But, Sir, ye lie, I tell you plat:
 He cometh no more ne goeth parde;
 I trowe ye shal him nevir se;
 Faire Welcoming in prison is
 That ofte hath plaied with you er this

7525

7530

The fairist gamis that he coude
 Withoutin filth, or stil or loude; 7535
 Now dare he not himselfe solace;
 Ye han also the man do chace,

That he dare neithir come ne go:
 What mevith you to hate him so
 But propirly your wickid thought, 7540

That many' a false lesing hath thought,
 That mevith your foule eloquence,
 That janglith evre' in audience,
 And on the folke arisith blame,

And doeth 'hem dishonour and shame 7545
 For thing that maie have no preving
 But likelineffe and contriving?

For I dare faine that Refon demeth
It is not al soto thing that semeth;
 And it is sinne for to controve 7550

Any thing that is to reprove;
 This wote ye wele, and, Sir, therfore
 Ye arne to blame mochil the more;

And nathèlesse he reckith lite
 He yeveth not now therof a mite, 7555
 For if he thoughtin harme, parfaie

He would ycome and gone all daie;
 He ne coude not himselfe abslene;
 Now cometh he not, and that is sene,

For he ne taketh of it no cure, 7560
 But if it be through avinture,

And lasse than othir folke algate,
 And thou here watchist at the gate
 With spere in thine arest alwaie,
 There muse musarde all the longe daie; 7565
 Thou wakist night and daie for thought;
 Iwis thy traveile is for nought,
 And Jelousie withoutin faile
 Shall nevir quite the thy traveile;
 And skate he is that Faire Welcoming, 7570
 Withoutin any trespassing,
 Shal wrongfully in prison be,
 There wepith and languishith he;
 And though thou nevir yet iwis
 Agiltist man no more but this 7575
 Take not a grese, it were worthy
 To put the out of this baily,
 And astirwarde in prison lie,
 And fettrid the till that thou die;
 For thou shalt for this finne dwelle 7580
 Right in the devil's arse of helle
 But if that thou repentè the.
 Maifaie thou lieft fassely (quod he.)

What, welcome with mischaunce now!
 Have I therfore herberid you 7585
 To saie me shame and eke reprove,
 With forie happe to your behove?
 Am I to day your herbegere?
 Go herbir you els where than here

That han a lier callid me. 7590
Two tregetours arte thou and he,
That in mine hous do me this shame,
7565 And for my sothesawe ye me blame.
Is this the sermon that ye me make?
To all the divils I me take, 7595
Or ellis God thou me confounde,
But er men didden this castill founde
7570 It passith not ten daies or twelve
But it was tolde right to my selve,
And as thei saide right so tolde I; 7600
He kiste the Rose privily;
Thus saide I now, and have said yore,
7575 I n'ot where he did any more:
Why should men saie me suche a thing
If that it had yben gabbing? 7605
Right so saide I, and woll saie yet,
I trowe I lyid not of it;
7580 And with my bemis I woll blowe
To allè neighbouris arowe
How he hath bothe comin and gone. 7610
Tho spake Falso Semblant right anone,
All is nat gospell out of doute
That men saine in the toune aboute:
Lay no dese ere to my speking,
I swere you, Sir, it is gabbing; 7615
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loveth him tendirly

That faith him harme, if he wote it,
 All be he ner so pore of wit;
 And sothe is also sikirly, 7620
 This know ye, Sir, as well as I,
 That lovirs gladly wol visiten
 The placis there ther loves habiten:
 This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
 This man to servin you laboureth, 7625
 And clepith you his frende so dere,
 And this man makith you gode chere,
 And every where that he you meteth
 He you saleweth and he you greteth;
 He presith nat so ofte that ye 7630
 Oughte of his coming encombrid be;
 There presin othir folke on you
 Ful ostir than he doith now;
 And if his hert him strainid so
 Unto the Rose for to go 7635
 Ye shoud him sene so oftin nede
 That ye shoud take him with the dede;
 He coude his comming not forbere,
 Though ye him thrillid with a spere;
 It n'ere not than as it is now; 7640
 But trustith well, I swere it you,
 That it is clene out of his thought.

Sir, certis he ne thinketh it nought,
 No more ne doth Faire Welcoming,
 That fore abyith all this thing, 7645

And if thei were of one assent,
 Full sone ywere the Rose ybent,
 Tho the malgre your's would ybe.

And, Sir, of o thing herkeneth me;
 Sithe ye this man that lovith you 7630
 Han faide such harme and shamè now,

Wittith well if he gessid it

Ye maie well demin in your wit

He ne wolde nothing love you so,

Ne callin you his frende also, 7635

But night and daie he wollin wake

The castill to distroie and take,

Yf it were sothe as ye devise;

Or some man in some manir wise

Might it warnin him every dele, 7640

Or by himselfe percevin wele,

For fithe he might not come and gone,

As he was whilom wonte to done, 7645

He might it sonè wite and se,

But now all othirwise wote he. 7650

Than have we, Sir, all uttirly

Deservid hell, and jolily

The deth of hellè doutileffe, 7655

That thrallin folke so giltileffe.

Falсе Semblant so provith this thing 7660

That he ne can none answering,

And seeth alwaie soche apparaunce

That nigh he fel in repentaunce, 7665

And said him ; Sir, it maie well be ;
 Semblant, a gode man femin ye, 7675
 And Abstinence, ful wise ye seme ;
 Of o talent you bothe I deme :
 What counsaile wol ye to me yeven ?

Right here anon thou shalt be shriven,
 And say thy sinne withoutin more ; 7680
 Of this shalt thou repent the sore,
 For I am priest, and have poste
 To shrive folk of most dignite
 That ben as wide as world maie dure ;
 Of al this world I have the cure, 7685
 And that had nevyr yet persoun
 Ne vicarie' of no manir toun.

And God it wot I have of the
 A thousande timis more pite
 Than hath thy priest parochiall, 7690
 Though he thy frende be speciall.

I have advantage in o wise,
 That your prelates ben not so wise
 Ne halfe so lettrid as am I ;
 I am licensid boldily 7695
 In divinite for to rede,
 And to confessin out of drede.

Yf that ye wol you now confesse,
 And leve your sinnis more and lesse,
 Without abode knele doune anon 7700
 And you shal have absolucion.

Here endeth The Romaunt of the Rose.

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TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

7675 THE double sorow of Troilus to telle,
That was the King Priamus sonne of Troy,
In loving how his aventuris felle
7680 From wo to wele, and astir out of joy,
My purpose is er that I partè fro'y.
Thou Thesiphone! thou helpe me t'endite
This woful verse, that wepin as I write. 7

To the I clepe, thou goddesse of tourment,
7685 Thou cruil wight, sorowing ay in paine!
Helpe me, that am the wofull instrument
That helpith lovirs as I can complaine;
For wel fit it, the sothè for to saine,
A woful wight to have a drery fere,
7690 And to a sorowfull tale a fory chere. 14

For I, that god of Lov'is servauntes serve,
Ne dare to love for mine unlikelineffe,
Prayin for speede, al should I therfore sterue,
So ferre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse;
7695 But nathèlesse if this may done gladnesse
To any lovir, and his cause aveile,
Have he the thanke and mine be the traveile. 21

7700 *Troilus and Creseide*] In this excellent boke is shewed the fervent love of Troilus to Creseide, whom he enjoyed for a time, and her grete untruthe to him againe in giving her self to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her off that she came to grete misery. In whiche discourfe Chaucer liberally treteth of the divine purveiaunce. Urry.

But ye lovirs that bathin in gladnesse,
 Yf any drope of pite in you be,
 Remembrith you of passid hevinesse
 That ye have felte, and on the' adversite
 Of othir folke, and thinkith how that ye
 Han felte that Love durst you to displese
 Or ye han won him with to gret an ese.

28

And prayith for 'hem that ben in the cace
 Of Troilus, as ye may astir here
 That Love 'hem bring in hevin to solace;
 And eke for me prayith to God so dere,
 That I have might to shew in some manere
 Suche paine and wo as Lov'is folke endure
 In Troilus unfely avinture.

35

And biddith eke for them that ben dispeired
 In love, that nevir will recovered be,
 And eke for them that falsely ben apeired
 Through wickid tongis, be it he or she,
 And biddith God for his benignite
 So graunt 'hem sone out of this world to pace
 That ben dispairid out of Lov'is grace.

42

And biddith eke for them that ben at ese
 That God 'hem graunt in love perfeveraunce,
 And sende 'hem grace ther lovirs for to plesse,
 That it to love be worship and plesaunce;
 For so hope I my selfe best to avaunce
 To pray for them that Lov'is servauntes be,
 And write ther wo, and live in charite;

49

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And for to have of them compassioun,
As though I were ther ownè brothir dere.
Now herkenith with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I go streight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double sorowes here
Of Troilus in loving of Creseide,
And how she forfoke him er that she deide.

36

It is wel wist how that the Grekis strong
In armis with a thousand shippis went
To Troiè wardis, and the cite long
Besiegedin, nigh ten yeres ere thei stent,
And how in divers wise and one entent,
The ravishing to wreke of Queine Heleine,
By Paris don, thei wroughtin all their peine.

63

Now tell it so that in the toun there was
Dwelling a lord of gret authorite,
A gret divine, that clepid was Calcas,
That in that science so' experte was that he
Knew wel that Troiè should distroyid be
By answer of his god, that hight was thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.

70

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the' answer of this god Apollo,
That Grekis shouldin suche a peple bring
Thorow the whiche that Troy must be fordo,
He caste anone out of the toun to go,
For wel he wist by sorte that Troiè sholde
Distroyid be, ye, would who so or n'olde ;

77

Wherfore for to departin softly
Toke purpose ful this wight, forknowing, wise,
And to the Grekis host ful privily
He stale anone, and thei in curteis wise
Didin to him both worshipp and service,
In trust that he hath conning 'hem to rede
In every peril which that was to drede.

84

Grete rumour rose whan it was first espied
In al the toune, and opinly was spoken
That Calcas traitour fled was, and alied
To them of Grece; and caste was to be wroken
On him that falsly hath his faith to broken,
And said that he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones.

91

Now had this Calcas leste in this mischaunce,
Unknowing of this false and wicked dede,
A doughtir whiche that was in grete penaunce,
And of her life she was full sore in drede,
And ne wist never what best was to rede;
And as a widowe was she and alone,
And n'ist to whom she might ymake her mone.

98

Creseide ywas this ladies name aright;
As to my dome in al Troy's cite
Most fairist lady, passing every wight;
So angelike shone her natife beaute
That like a thing immortal semid she,
And therwith was she so parfite a cature
As she had be made in scorning of Nature.

105

This lady, whiche that al day herde at ere
Her fathir's shame, his falsshed, and traifoun,
Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow' and fere,
In widowe's habite large of samite broun,
Before Hector on knees she fill adoun,
His mercy bad, her selfin excusing
With pitous voice, and tendirly weping. 112

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorowful begone,
And that she was so faire a creature,
Of his godenesse he gladid her anone,
And saidè, Let your fathir's traifon gone
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your self in joye
Dwellith with us whilis you list in Troye, 119

And al the honour men may do you have,
As forforth as though your fathir dwelt here,
Ye shul have, and your body shul men save,
As fer as I may ought enquire and here.
And she him thankid with ful humble chere,
And oftir wolde and it had been his will,
And toke her leve, went home, and helde her still. 126

And in her house she' abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was for to holde;
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her estate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her tolde;
But whethir that she childrin had or none
I rede it nat, therefore I let it gone. 133

The thingis fellin as thei done of werre
 Betwixin 'hem of Troie and Grekis ofte,
 For some day boughtin thei of Troie it derre,
 And eft the Grekis foundin nothing soft
 The folke of Troie: and thus Fortune alest
 And undir este gan 'hem to whelmin bothe,
 Astir her course, aie while that thei wer wrothe. 140

But how this toun came to distruccion
 Ne fallith not to purpose me to tel;
 For why? it were a long digression
 Fro my matir, and you to long to dwell;
 But the Troyan jessis, all as thei fel
 In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
 Who so that can may rede 'hem as thei write. 147

But though the Grekis them of Troie in shetten,
 And ther cite besegid al aboute,
 Ther olde usagis n'oldin thei not letten,
 As to honouren ther goddis ful devoute,
 But aldirmost in honour out of doute
 Thei had a relicke hight Palladion,
 That was ther trust abovin everichon. 154

And so besel, whan comin was the time
 Of Aprilis, whan clothid is the mede
 With newè grene, of lusty Ver the prime,
 And with swete smelling flouris white and rede
 In sondrie wise shewid, as I you rede,
 The folke of Troie ther observaunces olde,
 Palladion 'is fest, went for to holde. 161

Unto the temple in all ther best wise
 In general went every manir wight
 To herkin of Palladion's service,
 And namily many a lusty knight,
 And many' a lady fresh and maidin bright;
 Full well beseyn the most meynè and lest
 Both for the seson and for the hie fest. 168

e. 140

Among these othir folke was Creseida,
 In widdowe's habite blake; but nathèles
 Right as our first lettir is now an A,
 In beaute first so stode she makèles;
 Her godely loking gladdid all the pres;
 N'as nevir sene thing to be praised so derre,
 Nor under cloudè blake so bright a sterre 175

147
tten,

As was Creseide, thei saidin everichone
 That her beheldin in her blakè wede;
 And yet she stode ful lowe and stil alone,
 Behinde all othir folke, in litil brede,
 And nie the dore, aye undir sham'is drede,
 Simple' of atire, and debonaire of chere,
 With full affurid loking and manere. 182

154

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to gide
 His yongè knightis, ladde 'hem up and doune
 In thilke large temple on evèry side,
 Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
 Now here now there, for no devocioun
 Had he to none to revin him his rest,
 But gan to praise and lackin whom he lest. 189

de

161

And in his walke ful faste he gan to waiten
 If knight or squyr of his company
 Gan for to fike, or let his eyin baiten
 On any woman that he coude espie,
 Then he would smile, and holde it a folie,
 And say him thus; O Lord! she slepith softe
 For love of the, whan thou turnist ful ofte. 196

I have herde tel pardieux of your living;
 Ye lovirs, and of your leude observaunce,
 And whiche a labour folke have in winning
 Of love, and in the keping whiche doutaunce,
 And whan your pray is lost wo and penaunce.
 O very folis! blinde and nice be ye,
 There is not one can ware by othir be. 203

And with that worde he gan cast up his browe
 Ascaunce, lo! is this not wisely ispoken?
 At whiche the god of Love gan lokin rowe
 Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken;
 He kidde anon his bowe was not to broken,
 For sodainly he hitte him at the full,
 And yet as proude a pecocke can he pul. 210

O blindè worlde! o blinde entencioun!
 How oftin fallith al th' effecte contraire
 Of surquedrie and foule presumpcioun?
 For caught is proude and caught is debonaire;
 This Troilus is clombin on the staire,
 And litil wenith that he mote discende;
 But al day failith thing that folis wende. 217

As proude Bayard beginnith for to skippe
 Out of the way (so prickith him his corne)
 Till he a lashe have of the longè whippe,
 Than thinkith he though I praunce al beforne
 First in the traïse, full fatte and newe ishorne,
 Yet am I but an horse, and hors'is lawe
 I must endure, and with my feris drawe: 224

So fared it by this fiers and proude knight;
 Though he a worthy king'is sonnè were,
 And wenid that nothing had had such might
 Ayenst his wil that should his hertè stere,
 Yet with a loke his hert ywoxe on fire,
 That he that now was most in pride above
 Woxe sodainly moste subiect unto love. 231

Forthy ensample takith of this man
 Ye wise, proude, and worthy folkis all,
 To skornin Love, whiche that so sonè can
 The fredome of your hertis to him thral;
 For evir was and evir shall befall
 That Love is he that al thingis may binde,
 For no man maie fordo the law of kinde. 238

That this be sothe hath previd and doth yet,
 For this (trowe I) ye knowin al and some,
 Men redin nat that folke han grétir wit
 Than thei that han ben most with love inome,
 And strengist folke ben therwith ovircome,
 The worthyist and gretist of degre;
 This was and is, and yet man shal it se. 245

And truiliche it fitte well to be so,
 For aldirwifist han therwith ben plesed,
 And thei that han ben aldirmoste in wo
 With love han ben comfortid most and esed,
 And ofte it hath the cruill herte apesed,
 And worthy folke made worthyir of name,
 And causith most to dredin vice and shame. 251

Now sith it may nat godely be withstonde,
 And is a thing so vertuouus in kinde,
 Ne grudgith nought to Love for to ben bonde,
 Sithe as him selvin list he may you binde;
The yerde is bette that borwin wol and winde
Than that that brest; and therfore I you rede
 Felowith him that so well can you lede. 259

But for to tellin forth in speciall
 As of this king's sonne of whiche I tolde,
 And levin othir thing collaterall,
 Of him thinke I my tale forth to holde,
 Bothe of his joye and of his caris colde,
 And all his werke as touching this matere,
 For I it gan, I wol therto refere. 266

Within the temple wente him forth playing
 This Troilus with every wight about,
 On this lady and now on that loking,
 Wherefo she were of tounne or of without;
 And upon case besil that through a rout
 His eye ypercid, and so depe it went
 Til on Creseide it smote, and there it stent, 273

And sodainly for wondir wext astoned,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise;
O mercy, God! thought he, where hast thou wonned,
That arte so faire and godely to devise?

Therwith his hert began to sprede and rise,
And softe he sighid, lest men might him here,
And caught ayen his formir playing chere. 280

She n'as nat with the leste of her stature,
But al her limmis so wel answering
Werin to womanhode, that creature
Was nevir lassè mannishe in seming,
And eke the purè wife of her mening
She shewid wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly nobleffe. 287

Tho Troilus right wondir wel withall
Gan for to like her mening and her chere,
Whiche somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke alite a fide, in suche manere
Ascauncis, what! may I nat stondin here?
And astir that her loking gan she light,
That never thought him sene so gode a sight. 294

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So grete desire and suche affectioun,
That in his hert'is bottom gan to sticken
Of her his fixe and depe impressioun;
And though he erst had porid up and down
Than was he glad his hornis in to shrinke;
Unnethis wist he how to loke or winke. 301

Lo! he that lete him selvin so conning,
 And scornid 'hem that lov'is painis drien,
 Was ful unware that Love had his dwelling
 Within the subtil stremis of her eyen,
 That sodainly him thought that he felte dien
 Right with her loke the spirite in his herte:
 Blessid be Love, that thus can folke converte! 308

She thus in blake loking to Troilus
 Ovir al thing he stode for to beholde,
 But his desire, ne wherefore he stode thus,
 He neithir chere made ne worde thereof tolde,
 But from aserre, his manir for to holde,
 On othir thing somtime his loke he cast,
 And este on her, while that the service last. 315

And astir this, not fully all awhaped,
 Out of the temple esiliche he wente,
 Repenting him that evir he had japed
 Of Lov'is folke, lest fully the discente
 Of sorne fil on him self; but what he mente
 Leste it were wiste on any manir fide
 His wo he gan dissimulin and hide. 322

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
 He streight anone unto his palais turneth;
 Right with her loke thorough shottin and darged,
 Al frainith he in luste that he sojourneth,
 And all his chere and speche also' he abnormeth,
 And aie of Lov'is servauntes every while,
 Himselfe to wrie, at 'hem he gan to smile, 329

And sayd, Ah, Lord! so ye live all in lust,
 Ye lovirs, for the conningist of you,
 That servith most ententifeliche and best,
 Him tite as oft in harme therof as prowē;
 Your hire is quite ayen, ye, God wote howe,
 Not wel for wel, but skorne for gode servise;
 In faith your ordir is ruled in gode wise. 336

In no certaine ben your observaunces,
 But it in a few sely pointis be,
 Ne nothing asketh so gret attendaunces
 As doth your laie, and that knowin al ye;
 But that is not the worst, as mote I the,
 But tolde I which were the worst point, I leve,
 Al faide I sothe, ye woldin at me greve. 343

But take this; that ye lovirs ofte eschewe,
 Or ellis done of gode entencion,
 Ful ofte thy lady wol it misseconfrewe,
 And deme it harme in her opinion,
 And yet if she for othir encheson
 Be wroth, then shalt thou have a groin anone:
 Lorde! wel is him that may bene of you one! 350

But for al this, whan that he seeth his time,
 He held his pees, non othir bote him gained,
 For Love began his fethirs so to lime,
 That wel unneth unto his folke he fained
 That othir besy nedis him distrained:
 So wo was him that what to done he n'ist,
 But bad his folke to gone where as 'hem list. 357

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune upon his bedd'is fete him sette,
And first he gan to sike and este to grone,
And thought aie on her so withoutin lette;
That as he satte and woke his spirite mette
That he her saugh and temple', and all the wise
Right of her loke, and gan it newe avise. 364

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his minde,
In whiche he saugh all wholly her figure,
And that he wel coude in his hert yfinde.
It was to him a right gode-aventure
To love suche one, and if he did his cure
To servin her yet might he fal in grace,
Or els for one of her servauntes pace: 371

Imagining that ne travaile nor grame
Ne might for so godely an one be lorne,
As she ne him for his desire no shame,
Al were it wiste, but in prise and upborne
Of alle lovirs, wel more than beforne.
Thus argumentid he in his ginning,
Ful unavisd of his wo comming. 378

Thus toke he purpose Lov'is crafte to sewe,
And thought that he would workin privily,
First for to hide all his desire in mewe,
From every wight iborne all uttirly,
But he might ought recovered ben therby,
Remembring him that *Love to wide iblowe*
Telt bittir frute, although swete sede be sowe. 385

And ore al this ful mokil more he thought
What for to speke and what to holdin inne,
And what to artin her to love he sought,
And on a songe anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his sorowe for to winne;
For with gode hope he gan fully assente
Creseida for to love, and nought repente. 392

And of his songe not onely his sentence,
(As write mine auctour, callid Lolius)
But plainely, save our tong's difference,
I dare wel say in al that Troilus
Saied in his songe, lo! every word right thus
As I shal saine, and who so list it here
Lo! next this verse he may it findin here. 399

The songe of Troilus out of Petrarche.

If no love is, o God, what fele I so!
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be gode from whence comith my wo?
If it be wicke a wondir thinkith me,
Whan every turment and adversite
That cometh of him may to me savery thinke,
For aye more thurst I the more that I drinke. 406

And if that at mine ownè lust I brenne,
From whence comith my wailing and my pleinte?
If harme agre me wherto plaine I thenne?
I n'ot nere why unwery that I seinte.
O quickè deth! o swetè harme so queinte!
How may I se in me soche quantite
But if that I consente that it so be? 413

And if that I consente I wrongfully
 Complaine iwis. Thus possid to and fro,
 As sterelss wight is in a bote, am I,
 Amidde the se atwixin windis two
 That in contrarie stondin evirmo.
 Alas! what is this wondir maladie?
 For hete of colde, for colde of hete, I die. 410

And to the god of Love thus sayid he
 With pitous voice; O Lorde! now your'is is
 My spirite, whiche that oughtin your'is be;
 You thonke I, Lord, that han me brought to this;
 But whethir goddesse or woman iwis
 She be I n'ot whiche, that ye do me serve,
 But as her man I wol aie live and sterue. 427

Ye stondin in her eyin mightily,
 As in a place unto your vertue digne,
 Wherefore o Lord! if my service or I
 May likin you, so bethe me to ben,
 For mine estate royal here I resign
 Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
 Become her man, as to my lady dere. 434

Endeth the songe.

In him ne deigned to sparin blode royall
 The fire of love, wheresfro may God me blesse!
 Ne him forbare in no degre for all
 His vertue or his excellent prowesse,
 But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
 And brende him so in fondrie wise aie newe,
 That sixty times a day he losse his hewe. 441

So muchill daie fro daie his ownè thought
For luste to her gau quickin and encrese,
That everiche othir charge he sette at nought;
Forthy ful ofstyn, his hote fire to cese,
To sene her godely loke he gan to prese,
For therby to ben esid wel he wende,
And aie the nere he was the more he brende; 448

For aie the nere the fire the hottir is,
This (trowe I) knowith al this company;
But were he ferre or nere I dare saie this,
By night or daie, for wisedome or folie,
His hertè, whiche that is his brest'is eye,
Was aie on her, that fairir was to sene
Than evir was Helein or Polyxene. 455

Eke of the daie there passid nat an houre
But to himself a thousande times he saide,
God godely, to whom I serve and laboure
As best I can, now would to God, Creseide,
Ye wouldin on me rue er that I diede;
My dere herte, alas! mine hele, and my hewe,
And life, is losse but ye woll on me rewe. 462

All othir dredis werin from him fledde
Bothe of th' assiege and his salvacion,
Ne' in his desire none othir fancy bredde
But argumentes to this conclusion,
That she on him would han compassion,
And he to ben her man while he maie dure;
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure. 469

The sharpe shouris fell of armis preve
That Hector or his othir brethrin didden
Ne made him onely therefore onis meve,
And yet was he, wher so men went or ridden,
Found one the best, and lengist time abiden
There peril was, and eke did suche travail
In armis that to thinke it was mervaille. 476

But for none hate he to the Grekis had,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armis for to mad,
But onely lo! for this conclusioun,
To likin her, the bet for his renoun:
Fro daie to daie in armis so he spedde
That all the Grekis as the deth him dredde. 483

And fro this forthe tho rest him love his slepe,
And made his mete his foe, and eke his sorow
Gan multiplie, that who so toke kepe
It shewid in his hewe both even' and morow,
Therefore a tittle he gan him to borowe
Of othir sickenesse, lest men of him wende
That the hotte fire of cruill love him brende; 498

And saied he by a sevir fared amis:
But how it was certain I cannot say,
If that his ladie understode nat this,
Or fainid her she n'ist, one of the tweie;
But well rede I that by no manir weie
Ne semid it as if she on him rought,
Or of his paine, what so evir he thought. 497

But than yfelt this Troilus soche wo
That he was wel nigh wode; for aie his drede
Was this, that she some wight had lovid so
That ner of him she would han takin hede,
For whiche him thought he felte his hertè blede;
Ne of his wo ne durst he nought begin
To tellin her for all this worlde to win.

But whan he had a space left from his care
Thus to himself full oft he gan to plain;
He saied, O sole! now art thou in the snare
That whilom japedist at lov'is pain;
Now art thou hent, now gnaw thin ownè chain:
Thou wert aie woned eche lovir reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst nat the defende.

What woll now every lovir saine of the
If this be wist? but er in thine absence
Laughin in scorne, and fain, Lo! there goth he;
That is the man of so grete sapience,
That helde us lovirs lestè in reverence:
Now thanked be God he maie gon on the daunce
Of 'hem that Love listè feibly to avaunce:

But o thou wofull Troilus! God would
(Sithe thou must lovin through thy destine),
That thou beset wer of soche one that should
Know all thy wo, all lackid her pite!
But all so colde in love towardis the
Thy ladie is as frost in wintir mone,
And thou fordon as snowe in fire is sone.

God would I were arivid in the port
Of deth, to whiche my sorowe woll me lede!
Ah, Lorde! to me it were a grete comfort,
Than were I quite of languishing in drede,
For by my hidde sorowe iblowe in brede
I shall bejapid ben a thousande time
More than that sole of whose foly men rime. 532

But now helpe God, and ye my swete, for whom
I plaine; icought ye nevir wight so fast:
O mercie, my dere herte! and helpe me from
The deth, for I while that my life maie last
More than my life woll love you to my last;
And with some frendly loke gladith me, swete!
'Though nevir nothing more ye me behete. 539

These wordis and full many' an othir mo
He spake, and callid evir in his pleinte
Her name, to tellin unto her his wo,
Till nigh that he in salte teris was dreinte:
All was for nought; she herd nat his compleinte;
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thousand folde his wo gan multiplie. 546

Bewailing in his chambir thus alone
A frende of his, that callid was Pandare,
Came onis in unware, and herd him grone,
And sawe his frend in soche distresse and care;
Alas! (quod he) who causith all this fare?
O mercie God! what unhap maie this mene?
Han now thus sone the Grekis made you lene? 553

Or hast thou some remorse of conscience?
And art now fall in some devocioun,
And wailist for thy sinne and thine offence,
And hast for ferde ycought contricioun?
God save 'hem that besiegid han our toun,
That so can laie our jolite on presse,
And bring our lustie folke to holinesse! 560

These wordis saied he for the nonis all,
That with soche thing he might him angry maken,
And with his angre doen his sorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken;
But well wist he, as ferre as tongis speken,
There n'as a man of gretir hardinesse
Than he, ne more desirid worthinesse. 567

What cas (quod Troilus) or what avinture
Hath gidid the to sente me languishing,
That am refuse of every cature?
But for the love of God, at my praying,
Go hence awaie, for certis my dying
Woll the disese, and I mote nedis deie,
Therefore go waie; there n'is no more to seie. 574

But if thou wene I be thus sicke for drede
It is nat so, and therefore scorne me nought;
There is an othir thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekis han yet wrought,
Which cause is of my deth for sorow and thought,
But though that I now tell it the ne lesse
Be thou nat wrothe; I hide it for the beste. 581

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh,
Full oftin saied, Alas! what maie this be?
Now frende, (quod he) if evir love or trouth
Hath ben er this betwixin the and me
Ne doe thou nevir soche a cruilte
To hidin fro thy frende so grete a care;
Wost thou not well that it am I Pandare? 588

I woll partake with the of all thy paine;
If it so be I doe the no comfort,
As it is frend'is right, sothe for to faine,
To enterpartin wo as glad disport
I have and shall; for true or false report,
In wrong and right, iloved the all my live;
Hide not thy wo from me, but tell it blive. 593

Than gan this forowfull Troilus to fike,
And saied him thus; God leve it be my best
To tellin the, for sicke it maie the like
Yet woll I tell it the though my herte brest,
And well wote I thou maiest do me no rest,
But lest thou deme that I trust nat to the:
Now herkin frende, for thus it stant with me. 601

Love, ayenst the whiche who so defendith
Him selvin mooste him aldirlest availeth,
With dispeire so sorely me offendith
That streight unto the deth mine hert yfaileth,
Thereto desire so brenningly me' assaileth
That to ben slain it were a gretir joie.
To me than king of Grece to be and Troie. 609

Suffisith this, my fully frende Pandare,
That I have saied, for now wotest thou my wo,
And for the love of God my coldè care
So hide it well, I tolde it ner to mo,
For harmis mightin folowen mo than two
If it were wist; but be thou in gladnesse,
And let me sterve unknowe of my distresse. 616

How hast thou thus unkindely and long
Hid this fro me, thou sole? (quod Pandarus)
Paraventure thou maiest for soche one long
That mine avise anone maie helpin us.
This were a wondir thing, (quod Troilus)
Thou couldist ner in love thy selfin wisse,
How devill maiest thou bringin me to blisse? 623

Ye, Troilus, now herkin, (quod Pandare.)
Though I be nice, it happith oftin so,
That one that of axis doeth full ill fare
By gode counsaile can kepe his frend therfro;
I have my self yseine a blinde man go
There as he fell which that could lokin wide:
A sole maie eke a wise man oftin gide. 630

A whetstone is no kerving instrument,
But yet it makith sharpe kerving tolis;
And if thou wost that I have aught miswent
Eschue thou that, for soche thing to schole is,
Thus oftin wise men ben warin by folis:
If thou so do thy wit is well bewared;
By his contrary' is every thing declared. 637

For how might evir swetnesse have be know
To him that nevir tastid bittirnesse?
No man ne wot what gladnesse is I trowe
That nevir was in sorowe' or some distresse;
Eke white by black, by shame eke worthines;
Eche set by othir more for othir semeth,
As men maie sene, and so the wise it demeth. 644

Sithe thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that in love so oftin have assayed
Grevauuncis ought to connin well the more
Counsaillin the of that thou art dismaied,
And eke the ne ought not ben ill apaied
Though I desirin with the for to bere
Thine hevie charge; it shall the lasse the dere. 651

I wote well that it farid thus by me
As to my brothir Paris an heirdesse
Whiche that yclepid was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her hevinesse;
Ye sawe the lettir that she wrote I gesse.
Naie, nevir yet iwis (quod Troilus.)
Now (quod Pandare) herkinith, it was thus. 658

Phœbus, that first found art of medicine,
(Quod she) and coud in every wight'is care
Remedy' and rede by herbis he knewe fine,
Yet to himself his conning was full bare,
For love had him so boundin in a snare,
All for the doughter of the King Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his sorowe bete. 665

Right so fare I; unhappily for me
 I love one best, and that me smertith fore,
 And yet paravinture I can rede the
 And nat my self; reprove thou me no more,
 I have no cause, I wote well for to fore
 As doeth an hauke that listith for to plaie,
 But to thine helpe yet somewhat can I saie. 672

And of o thing right sikir maiest thou be,
 That certain for to dyin in the pain
 That I shall nevyr mo discovir the,
 Ne by my trowth I kepe nat to restrain
 The fro thy love, although it were Helein,
 That is thy brothir's wife, if I it wist,
 Be what she be, and love her as the list. 679

Therefore as frendfulliche in me assure,
 And tell me platte what is thine encheson
 And finall cause of wo that ye endure,
 For doubtith nothing mine entencion
 N'as nat to you of reprehension
 To speke as now, for no wight maie bireve
 A man to love till that him list to leve. 686

And therefore wetith wel that both ben vics,
 Mistrustin all or ellis all beleve;
 But well I wote the mene of it no vice is,
 As for to trustin some wight is a preve
 Of trowth, and forthy would I fain remeve
 Thy wrong conceipt, and do the some wight trust
 Thy wo to tell, and tell me if the lust. 693

The wife saieth, Wo is him that is alone,
 For and he fall he hath none helpe to rise;
 And sithe thou hast a felowe tell thy mone,
 For this he is nought certain the next wise
 To winnin love, as techin us the wise,
 To waile and wepe as Niobe the quene,
 Whose teris yet in marble ben isene. 700

Let be thy weping and thy drerinesse,
 And let us lessin wo with othir speche,
 So maie thy wofull time semin the lesse;
 Delitith nought in wo thy wo to feche,
 As doen these folis that ther sorowes eche
 With sorowe whan thei han misavinture,
 And lustin nought to sechin othir cure. 707

Men saine, *To wretche is consolacion*
To have an othir felowe in his paine;
 That ought well to ben our opinion,
 For we bothe thou and I of love do plain;
 So full of sorowe am I, sothe to saine,
 That certainly as now no more hard grace
 Maie sit on me; for why? there is no space. 714

Yf God wol thou art nought agast of me
 Lest I would of thy lady the begile;
 Thou wost thy self whom that I love parde,
 As I best can, gon sithin longè while,
 And sithe thou wost I do it for no wile,
 And sithe I am he that thou trustith most,
 Tel me somwhat, sens al my wo thou woste. 721

Yet Troilus for al this no worde saide,
 But long he laie as still as he ded were,
 And astir this with fiking he abraide,
 And to Pandarus voice he lent his ere,
 And up his eien cast he; and than in sere
 Was Pandarus leste that in a frenseye
 He should yfal, or ellis sonè deye; 728

And said, Awake, full wondirliche and sharpe;
 What slombrist thou as in a lethargy?
 Or art thou like an asse unto the harpe,
 That herith foun, whan men the stringis ply,
 But in his mind of that no melodie
 Maie sinkin him to gladin, for that he
 So dull is in his bestialite? 735

And with this Pandare of his wordis stent,
 But Troilus to him no thing answerde;
 For why? to tellin was nought his entent
 Ner to no man for whom that he so ferde,
 For it is said, *Men makin ofte a yerde*
With which the makir is himselfe ibeten
 In sondrie manir, as these wise men treten. 742

And namèliche in his counsaile telling
 That touchith love, that ought to ben secre,
 For of himselfe it woll inough out spring,
 But if that it the bet governid be;
 Eke somtime it is crafte to seme to fle
 Fro thing which in effeete men huntin faste:
 Al this gan Troilus in his herte caste. 749

But nathelesse whan he had herde him crie
Awake, he gan to fike wondir fore,
And sayd, My frende, although that still I lie
I n'am not defe; now pece, and crie no more,
For I have herde thy wordis and thy lore,
But suffir me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbis may nought me availen;

756

Nor othir cure ne canst thou none for me,
Eke I n'il not ben curid; I woll die:
What knowin I of the Quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde ensamplis, I the prey.
No, frende, (quod Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delite of folis to bewepe
Ther wo, but to sokin bote thei ne kepe.

763

Now know I that there reson in the faileth;
But tellith me, if I wiste what she were
For whome that the al misavinture aileth
Durste thou trust that I tolde it in her ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy selfe for fere,
And her besought on the to han some rounthe?
Why nay, (quod he) by God and by my trouthe.

770

What! not as befily (quod Pandarus)
As though mine ownè life lay in this nede?
Why no, parde, Sir, (quod this Troilus.)
And why? For that thou shouldist nevir spede.
Wost thou that well? Ye, that is out of drede,
(Quod Troilus) for all that er ye conne
She wol to no suche wretche as I be wonne.

777

(Quod Pandarus) Alas! what may this be
 That thou dispairid art thus caufileffe?
 What! liveth nat thy lady? *Benedicite!*
 How wost thou so that thou art gracileffe?
 Suche evil is not alwaie botèlesse;
 Why put not thus impossible thy cure,
 756 Sith thing to come is ofte in avinture? 784

I grauntin well that thou endurist wo
 As sharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
 Whose stomake foulis tirin evir mo
 That hightin Vulturis, as bokis tell;
 But I may not endurin that thou dwell
 In so unskilful an opinion
 763 That of thy wo n'is no curacion; 791

But onis n'ilt thou for thy cowarde herte,
 And for thine ire and folish wilfulnesse,
 For wantrust tellin of thy sorowe' smerte,
 Ne to thine ownè helpe do besineffe
 As moche as speke a worde ye more or lesse,
 But liest as he that of life nothing retche:
 766 What woman living coude love suche a wretche? 798

What may she demin othir of thy dethe,
 Yf thou thus die, and she n'ot why it is,
 But that for fere is yoldin up thy brethe
 For Grekis han besiegid us iwis?
 Lord! which a thanke shalt thou have than of this!
 Thus wol she saine, and al the toun atones,
 The wretch is ded, the divel have his bones! 805

Thou maiste alone here wepe, and crie, and knele,
And love a woman that she wote it nought,
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not fele,
Unknow unkist, and lost that is unfought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere abought
Twenty wintir that his lady ne wiste,
That never yet his ladie's mouthe he kiste. 812

What! should he therfore fallin in dispaire,
Or be recreaunte for his ownè tene,
Or slain himself, all be his ladie faire?
Naie, naie; but er in one be fresh and grene,
To serve and love ay his dere hert'is quene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serve
A thousande folde more than he can deserve. 819

And of that wordè toke hede Troilus,
And thought anone what folie he was in,
And how that sothe him sayid Pandarus,
That for to slaen himself might he not win,
But bothe to doen unmanhode and a sinne,
And of his deth his ladie nought to wite,
For of his wo God wot she knewe full lite. 826

And with that thought he gan ful fore to fike,
And saied, Alas! what is me best to doe?
To whom Pandare answerid, If the like
The best is that thou tell me all thy wo,
And have my trouth but if thou find it so,
I be thy bote or that it ben full long
To peccis doe me drawe and sithin hong. 833

knele,

Ye, so saiest thou, (quod Troilus) alas!
 But God wot it is naught, the rathir so
 Full harde it were to helpin in this caas,
 For well finde I that Fortune is my fo,
 Ne all the men that ridin con or go
 Maie of her cruill whele the harme withstond,
 For as her list she plaieith with fre and bond. 840

814

(Quod Pandarus) Than blamist thou Fortune
 For thou art wroth ye now at erst I se;
 Wost thou not wel that Fortune is commune
 To every manir wight in some degre?
 And yet thou hast this comfort, lo! parde,
 That as her joyis motin ovirgone
 So mote her sorowes passin everichone. 847

819

For if her whele stint any thing to tourne
 Than cessith she Fortune anone to be;
 Now sith her whele by no waie maie sojourn
 What wost thou of her mutabilite?
 Right as thy self lust she woll done by the,
 Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping,
 Paravinture thou hast cause for to sing. 854

826

like,

And therfore wost thou what I the besече?
 Let be thy wo and touning to the grounde,
 For who so liste have heling of his leche
 To him bihovith first unwrie his wounde;
 To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
 Were it eke for my sustir all thy sorowe,
 By my gode will she should be thine to morowe. 861

833

Loke up I saie, and tell me what she is
 Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede.
 Know I her aught? for my love tell me this,
 Than would I hope the rathir for to spede.
 Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede,
 For he was hit, and woxe all redde for shame.
 Aha! (quod Pandare) here beginnith game. 868

And with that worde he gan him for to shake,
 And saied him thus; Thefe, thou shalt her name tell:
 But tho gan fely Troilus for to quake,
 As though men should han had him into hel,
 And saied, Alas! of all my wo the well
 Than is my swete foe callid Creseide;
 And well nigh with that word for fere he deide. 875

And whan that Pandare herd her namè neven,
 Lorde! he was glad, and sayid, Frend so dere,
 Now fare a right, for Jov's name in heven
 Love hath beset the well: be of gode chere,¹
 For of gode name, and wisedom, and manere,
 She hath inough, and eke of gentillnesse:
 If she be faire thou wost thy self I gessie. 881

Ne nevir seie I a more bounteous
 Of her estate, ne gladdir, ne of speche
 A frendlier, ne none more gracious
 For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seche
 What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
 In honour to as ferre as she may stretchē:
 A king's herte semith by her's a wretchē. 889

And forthy loke of gode comforte thou be,
 For certainly the firste pointe is this
 Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
 A man to have pece with himselfe iwis;
 So oughtist thou, for nought but gode it is
 To lovin wel and in a worthy place;
 The ought not to clepin it happe but grace. 896

And also thinke, and therwith gladdin the,
 That sith thy lady vertuous is all,
 So foloweth it that there is some pite
 Amongis all these othir in generall,
 And for thei se that thou in speciall
 Requirist nought that is ayen her name,
 For Vertue stretchith not himselfe to shame. 903

But wel is me that evir I was borne
 That thou beset art in so gode a place,
 For by my trouth in love I durst have sworne
 The should nevir have tidde so faire a grace;
 And wost you why? for thou were wont to chace
 At Love in scorne, and for dispite him call
 Saint Idiot, lorde of these folis all. 910

How oftin hast thou madin thy nice japes?
 And saied that Lov'is servauntes everichone
 Of nicete ben very godd'is apes,
 And some of them would monche ther mete alone
 Ligging a bedde, and make 'hem for to grone,
 And some thou saidist had a blaunche severe,
 And praidist God thei should nevir kevere: 917

And some of 'hem toke on 'hem for the cold
 More than inough; so saidist thou full oft,
 And some han fainid oftin time, and tolde
 How that thei wakin whan thei slepin soft,
 And thus thei would have set 'hem self aloft,
 And nathèlesse were undir at the laste;
 Thus saidist thou, and japidist full faste.

924

Yet saidist thou that for the morè part
 These lovirs wouldin speke in generall,
 And thoughtin that it was a sikir art
 For failing for to' affayin ovir all:
 Now maie I jape of the if that I shall;
 But nathèlesse although that I should deie
 Thou ne art none of tho I dare well seie.

931

Now bete thy brest, and saie to god of Love,
 Thy grace, o Lord! for now I me repent
 If I misspake, for now my self I love;
 Thus saie with all thine hert in gode entent.
 (Quod Troilus) Ah, Lorde! I me consent,
 And praie to the my japis thou foryeve,
 And I no more will jape while that I live.

938

Thou saiest well, (quod Pandare) and now I hope
 That thou the godd'is wrath hast al apesed;
 And sithin thou hast weptin many' a drope,
 And said soch thing wherwith thy god is plesed,
 Now would God nevir but that thou were esed,
 And thinke well she of whom rest all thy wo
 Hereastir maie thy comfort ben also.

945

For thilke ground that berith the wedis wicke
 Bereth eke these wholsome herbis as full oft,
 And nexte to the foule nettle rough and thicke
 The rose ywexith sote, and smothe, and soft,
 And next the valey is the hill aloft,
 And next the derkè night is the glad morowe,
 And also joie is next the fine of sorowe.

924

953

Now loke that well attempre be thy bridell,
 And for the best aie suffre to the tide,
 Or ellis all our labour is on idell:

He bastith well that wisely can abide.

Be diligent and true, and aie well hide:

Be lustie, fre: persever in servise,

931

And all is well if thou werke in this wise:

959

But he that partid is in every place
 Is no where whole, as writin clerkis wise;
 What wondir is if soche one have no grace?
 Eke wost thou how it fareth of some servise?

As plant a tre or herbe in sondrie wise,

And on the morowe pull it up as blive,

938

No wondir is though it maie nevir thrive.

966

And sith the god of Love hath the bestowed

In place digne unto thy worthinesse,

Stonde fast, for to a gode port hast thou rowed,

And of thy self for any hevinesse

Hope alwaie well; for but if drerinesse

Or ovirhast doe our bothe labour shende

I hope of this to makin a gode ende.

973

And wost thou why? I am the lasse asered
Of this matter with my nece for to trete,
For this have I herd saie of wise and lered,
Was nevyr man or woman yet beycte
That was unapt to suffre lov'is hete
Celestiall, or ellis love of kinde;
Forthy some grace I hope in her to finde.

980

And for to speke of her in speciall,
Her beaute to bethinkin and her youthe,
It fit her nought to ben celestiall
As yet, though that her bothè list and kouthe;
And truily it fit her well right nouth
A worthie knight to lovin and cherice,
And but she doe I holde it for a vice.

987

Wherefore I am and woll be aie redy
To painin me to do you this service,
For bothe of you to plesin; this hope I
Hereastirwardis, for ye ben bothe wise,
And connin counsaile kepe in soche a wise
That no man shall the wisir of it be;
And so we maie ben gladdid allè thre.

994

And by my trouth I have right now of the
A gode conceit in my wit as I gesse,
And what it is I woll now that thou se;
I think that sithin Love of his godenesse
Hath the convertid out of wickidnesse
That thou shalt ben the bestè post I leve
Of all his laie, and moste his soyn greve.

1001

Ensample why, se now these gretè clerkes,
 That errin aldirmoste ayen all lawe,
 And ben convertid from ther wickid werkes
 Through grace of God, that lest 'hem to him drawe,
 Than arne thei folk that han most God in awe,
 And strengift faithid ben I undirstonde,
 And con an errour aldirbest withstonde. 1008

980 Whan Troilus had herde Pandare assented
 To ben his helpe in loving of Creseide
 He wext of wo, as who saith unturmented,
 But hottir wext his love; and than he saide
 With sobre chere, as though his herte yplaide,
 Now blisfull Venus! helpe er that I sterue.
 987 Of the, Pandare, I now some thanke deserve. 1015

But, derè frende, how shal my wo be lesse
 Till this be done? and, gode now, tell me this,
 How wolt thou saine of me and my distresse,
 Lest she be wroth? this drede I most iwis,
 Or wol not herin al how that it is:

Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
 994 Of the her eme she n'il no suche thing here. 1023

(Quod Pandarus) Thou hast a ful grete care
 Lest that the chorle may fal out of the mone.

Why, Lorde! I hate of the the nicè fare;
 Why entremete of that thou hast to done?

For Godd'is love I bidè the a bone;
 So let me' alone, and it shal be thy best. 1028

1001 Why, frende, (quod he) than done right as the lest:

But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I ne wolde
 That thou in me wendist so grete folie
 That to my lady I desirin sholde
 That touchith harme or any vilanie,
 For dredileffe me were lewir to die
 Than she of me aught ellis understode
 But that that might yfownin into gode.

1036

Tho lough this Pandare, and anon answerde,
 And I thy borow' ? fie ! no wight doth but so :
 I ne raught not although she stode and herde
 How that thou saiest : but farewell, I wol go :
 Adieu ; be glad : God spede us bothè two !
 Yeve me this labour and this businesse
 And of my spede be thine al the swetnes.

1043

Tho Troilus on knees gan doune to fall,
 (And Pandare in his armis hente him fast)
 And saide, Nowe fie upon the Grekis all !
 Yet parde God shal helpin at the last,
 And dredileffe if that my life may last,
 And God toforne, lo ! some of 'hem shal smerte ;
 And yet me' athinketh that this avaunt m'asterte.

1049

And now, Pandare, I can no morè say,
 But thou wise, thou wost thou maist : thou art al ;
 My life, my deth, hole in thine honde I lay ;
 Helpe me (quod he.) Yes, by my trouth I shal.
 God yelde the, frende, and this in special,
 (Quod Troilus) that thou me recommaunde
 To her that may me to the deth commaunde.

1057

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
 His ful frendè, tho saide in this manere ;
 Farwel, and thinke I wol thy thanke deserve,
 Have here my trowth, and that thou shalt well here :
 And went his way thinking on this matere,
 And how he best might her beseeche of grace,
 And find a lesure therto and a place. 1064

For every wight that hath a house to found
 He rennith nat the werke for to beginne
 With rakel honde, but he wol bide a stound,
 And sende his hert'is line out fro within,
 Thus aldirfirst his purpose for to winne,
 As this Pandarus in his hert'is thought
 Did cast his werke full wisely er he wrought. 1071

But Troilus lay tho no lengir down,
 But up anon gat upon his stede baie,
 And in the felde he playid the lioun ;
 Wo was that Greke that with him met that daie :
 And in the tounè his manir tho forthe aie
 So godely was, and gat him so in grace,
 That eche him loved that lokid in his face. 1078

For he becamin the most frendly wight,
 The gentilist, and eke the mostè fre,
 The trustyist, and one the bestè knight,
 That in his time was or ellis might be :
 Ded were his japis and his cruilte,
 Ded his high porte and all his manir straunge,
 And eche of 'hem gan for a vertue chaunge. 1085

Now let us stint of Troilus a stounde,
 That farith like a man that hurt is fore,
 And is somdele of aking of his wounde
 Ylessid wel, but helid no dele more,
 And as an esy pacient the lore
 Abite of him that goth about his cure,
 And thus he drivith forth his avinture.

1091

Explicit liber primus.

PROCEMIUM LIBRI SECUNDI.

Out of these blackè wawis let us faile,
 O winde, o winde! the wedir ginnith clere,
 For in the se the bote hath fuche travaile
 Of my conning that unneth I it stere:
 This se clepe I the tempestous matere
 Of depe dispaire that Troilus was in;
 But now of hope the kalendis begin.

O lady mine, that callid art Clio!
 Thou be my spede fro this forthe, and my Muse,
 To rimè wel this Boke til I have do;
 Me nedith here none othir art to use;
 For why? to every lovir I me' excuse
 That of no sentiment I this endite,
 But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherefore I n'il have neither thanke ne blame
Of all this Worke, but praie you mekily
Disblamith me if any worde be lame,
For as mine auctour sayid so say I;
Eke though I speke of love unfeelingly
No wondir is, for it nothinge of newe is:

1091

A blinde man can not iudge wel in beuoy. 21

I know eke that in forme of speche is chaunge
Within a thousande yere, and wordis tho
That haddin prife now wondir nice and straunge
Us thinkith 'hem, and yet thei spake 'hem so,
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eke for to winnin love in fondry ages
In fondry londis fondry ben usages. 28

NDI.

And forthy if it happe in any wise
That here be any lovir in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol devise,
How Troilus came to his ladie's grace,
And thinkith so n'olde I not love purchase,
Or wondrith on his speche or his doying,
I n'ot, but it is to me no wondring: 35

Muse,

For every wight whiche that to Rome ywent
Halt nat o pathe ne alway o manere;
Eke in some londe were al the game yshent
Yf that men farde in love as men don here,
As thus, in opin doying or in chere,
In visiting, in forme, or said our sawes;
For thus men saine, *Ecce cowntre hath his lawes.* 42

Volume VIII.

M

Eke scarcely ben there in this place thre
 That have in love said like and done in al,
 For to this purpose this maie likin the,
 And the right nought, yet al is done or shal;
 Eke some men grave in tre, some in stone wal,
 As it betide: but fith I have begonne,
 Mine authour shal I folow as I konne.

49

Explicit Proamium.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

IN May, that mothir is of monethis glade,
 That the freshe flouris all, blew, white, and rede,
 Ben quicke ayen that wintir ded had made,
 And full of haume is fleting every mede,
 Whan that Phœbus doth his bright bemis spred
 Right in the white Bole, right so it betidde,
 As I shal singe, on May's day the thridde,
 That Pandarus, for all his wife speche,
 Felte eke his parte of Lov's shottis kene,
 That coude he ner so well of loving preche
 It made his hewe al daie ful oftin grene;
 So shope it that him fill that day a tene
 In love for whiche in wo to bedde he went,
 And made er it were day full many' a went.

56

63

The swalow Progne with a sorowfull lay,
 Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
 Why she forshapin was; and ever lay
 Pandare abed halfe in a flombering,
 Til she so nigh him made her waimenting,
 How Tereus gan forth her sustir take,

That with the noise of her he gan awake, 70

And to call, and dresse him up to rise,
 Remembring him his arande was to done
 From Troilus, and eke his grete emprise,
 And cast, and knew in gode plite was the mone
 To done voiage, and toke his way full sone
 Unto his nec'is paleis there beside:

Now Janus, god of Entre, thou him gide! 77

Whan he was come unto his nec'is place,
 Where is my lady, to her folke (quod he?)
 And thei him tolde, and he forthe in gan pace,
 And founde two othir ladies sit and she
 Within a pavid parlour, and thei thre
 Herdin a maidin 'hem redin the geste
 Of the sieg of Thebis whilis 'hem leste. 84

Madame, quod Pandare, God you save and se,
 With al your boke and al the companie!
 Eighe! uncle mine, welcome iwis, (quod she)
 And up she rose, and by the honde in hie
 She toke him fast, and sayid, This night thrye,
 To gode mote it yturne, of you I mette;
 And with that word she doun on benche him set. 91

Ye, nece, ye shullin farin wel the bet,
 If God wol, al this yere, (quod Pandarus)
 But I am sory that I have you let
 To herkin of your boke ye praisin thus:
 For Godd'is love what faith it? tel it us;
 Is it of love? some gode ye may me lere.
 Uncle, (quod she) your maistresse is nat here. 98

With that thei gonnin laugh, and tho she seide,
 This romaunce is of Thebis that we rede,
 And we have herd how that King Laius deide
 Through Oedipus his sonne, and all the dede;
 And here we flintin at these letters rede
 How the bishop, as the boke can ytell,
 Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell. 105

(Quod Pandarus) All this know I my selve,
 And al th' assiege of Thebis and the care,
 For herof ben there makid bokis twelve:
 But let be this, and tell me how ye fare:
 Do' way your barbe, and shew your facè bare;
 Do' way your boke: rise up and let us daunce,
 And let us done to May some observaunce. 112

Eighe! God forbid! (quod she.) What! be ye mad?
 Is that a widowe's life, so God you save?
 Parde you makin me right sore adrad;
 Ye bene so wilde it semith as ye rave:
 It sat me wel bettir aie in a cave
 To bide, and rede on holy faintis lives:
 Let maidins gon to daunce and yongè wives. 119

Asevir thrive I (quod this Pandarus)
 Yet coude I tel a thing to don you play.
 Now uncle dere (quod she) tellith it us
 For Godd'is love: is than th' assiege aweie?
 I am of Grekis ferde so that I deie.

Nay, nay, (quod he) as evir mote I thrive
 It is a thing wel bettir than suche five. 126

Ye, holy God! (quod she) what thing is that?
 What! bettir than suche five? Eighe! nay iwis
 For al this world ne can I redin what
 It shoud yben: some jape I trowe it is;
 And but your felvin tel us what it is
 My wit is for to arede it al to lene:

As helpe me God I n'ot what that ye mene. 133

And I your borow; ne ner shal (quod he)
 This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thrive.
 And why so, uncle mine, why so? (quod she.)
 By God (quod he) that wol I tel as blive,
 For proudir woman is there none on live,
 And ye it wiste, in al the toune of Troic:

I ne jape nat, so evir have I joie. 140

Tho gan she to wondrin more than before
 A thousande folde, and doune her eyin cast,
 For nevir sithe the time that she was bore
 To knowin thing desirid she so fast,
 And with a sike she said him at the last,
 Now, uncle mine, I n'il you not displese,
 Nor askin that that may do you disese.

147

M iij

So aftir this with many wordis glade
 And frendly talis, and with mery chere,
 Of this and that thei speke, and gonnin wade
 In many an unkouth, glad, and depe, matere,
 As frendis done whan thei ben met ifere,
 Til she gan askin him how Hector ferde,
 That was the toun's wall and Grekis yerde. 154

Ful wel, I thanke it God, saide Pandarus,
 Save in his arme he hath a litle wounde;
 And eke his freshe brothir Troilus,
 To the wise worthy Hector the secounde,
 In whom that every vertue liste habounde,
 As alle trouthe and alle gentilnesse,
 Wisedome, honour, fredome, and worthinesse. 161

In gode faith, eme, (quod she) that likith me
 Thei farin wel; God save 'hem bothè two!
 For trewliche I holde it a grete deinte
 A king's sonne in armis wel to do,
 And be of gode condicions therto,
 For grete powir and moral vertue here
 Is selde ifene in one persone ifere. 168

In gode faith that is sothe, (quod Pandarus)
 But by my trowth the king hath sonnis twey,
 That is to mene Hector and Troilus,
 That certainly though that I should ydey
 Thei ben as voide of vicis, dare I sey,
 As any men that livin undir sonne;
 Ther might is wide iknowand what thei conne. 175

Of Hector nedith nothing for to tel;
In all this worlde there n'is a bettir knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse the wel,
And he wel more of vertue hath than might,
This knowith many' a wise and worthy knight:
And the same prise of Troilus I sey:
God helpe me so I know not suche twey. 182

Parde (quod she) of Hector that is sothe,
And of Troilus the same thing trowe I,
For dredileffe men tellith that he dothe
In armis day by day so worthily,
And berith him here at home so gently
To evèry wight, that al prise hath he
Of them that me were levisl praisid be. 189

Ye say right sothe iwis, (quod Pandarus)
For yesterday who so had with him ben
Mightin have wondrid upon Troilus,
For nevir yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flewe as Grekis from him gannin fleen,
And through the felde in every wight'is cre
There was no crie but Troilus is there! 196

Now here now there he huntid 'hem so fast
There n'as but Grekis blode and Troilus;
Now him he hurt, and him al doun he cast;
Aye where he went it was arrayid thus:
He was ther deth, and shelde and life for us,
That as that day ther durst him none withstonde
While that he helde his bledy swerde in honde. 203

Therto he is the frendlyist man
 Of gret estate that er I sawe my live,
 And where him liste the best felowship can
 To suche as him thinkith able to thrive.
 And with that word tho Pandarus as blive
 He toke his leve, and said I wol gon hen.
 Nay, blame have I, myne uncle, (quod she) then. 210

What cilith you to be thus wery sone,
 And namiliche of women wol ye so?
 Naie, sittith doune; parde I have to done
 With you to speke of wisdome er ye go;
 And every wight that was about 'hem tho
 That herdè that gan ferre awaie to stonde.
 While thei two had al that 'hem liste in honde. 217

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
 Of her estate and of her governaunce,
 (Quod Pandarus) Now time is that I wende,
 But yet I say Arisith, let us daunce
 And caste your widowe's habite to mischaunce;
 What liste you thus your selfe to disfigure,
 Sithe you is tidde so glad an avinture? 224

But wel bethought; for love of God (quod she)
 Shal I nat wetin what ye mene of this?
 No, this thing askith lesir tho (quod he)
 And eke it me would full muche greve iwis
 If I it tolde and ye it toke amis:
 Yet were it bette my tonge to holdin stil
 Than say a sothe that were ayenst your wil. 231

For, nece myne, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that makith the thonde'ring,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living,
Withoutin paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothist am to greve,
And that ye wetin wel your selfe I leve. 238

Iwis, mine uncle, (quod she) graunt mercy!
Your frendship have I foundin evir yet;
I am to no man beholdin trewly
So muche as you, and have so litil quit;
And with the grace of God emforth my wit
As in my gilte I shal you ner offende,
And if I have er this I wol amende. 245

But for the love of God I you besече,
As ye be he that I love most and triste,
Let be to me your fremid manir speche,
And saie to me your nece what so you list.
And with that worde her uncle anon her kist,
And sayid, Gladly, my leve nece so dere!
Take it for gode that I shal say you here. 252

With that she gan her cyin doune to caste,
And Pandarus to coughe began a lite,
And sayid, Nece, alway, lo! to the laste,
How so it be that some men hem delite
With subtil art ther talis for t'endite,
Yet for al that in ther entencion
Ther tale is all for some conclusion. 359

And sithe the end is every tal'is strength,
 And this matir is so behovily,
 What should I paint or drawin it on length
 To you that ben my frende so faithfully?
 And with that worde he gan right inwardly
 Beholdin her, and lokin in her face,
 And saide, On fuche a mirroure muche gode grace! 266

Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
 Ought harde; or make a processe any while,
 She shal no favour have therin but lite,
 And trowe I would her in my wil begile,
 For tendir wittis wenin al be wile
 Wher as thei con nat plainliche undirstond;
 Forthy her wit to sounin wol I fonde; 273

And lokid on her in a besy wise,
 And she was ware that he behelde her so:
 Ah, Lorde! (quod she) so faste ye me avise,
 Sawe ye me ner er now? what, say ye no?
 Yes, yes, (quod he) and bet wol er I go;
 But by my trowth I thoughtin nowe if ye
 Be fortunate, for now men shal it se. 280

For every wight some godely avinture
 Somtime is shape, if he it can receive,
 But if that he n'il take of it no cure
 When that it cometh, but wilfully it weive,
 I.o, neither case nor Fortune him deceive,
 But right his ownè slouth and wretchidnesse;
 And fuche a wight is for to blame I gesse. 287

Gode avinture, o bellè nece! have ye
 Ful lightly foundin, and ye conne it take;
 And for the love of God and eke of me
 Catche it anone, lest avinture yflake:
 What should I lengir processe of it make?
 Yeve me your hond, for in this world is none,
 If that you list, a wight so wel begon. 394

And sithe I speke of gode entencioun,
 As I to you have tolde wel here beforne,
 And love as wel your honour and renoun
 As any cature in the worlde iborne,
 By al the othis that I have you sworne
 And ye be wrothe therfore, or wene I lie,
 Ne shal I never sene you este with eie. 301

Beth nat agaste, ne quakith nat; wherto?
 Ne chaungith nat for ferè so your hewe,
 For hardily the worst of this is do;
 And though my tale as now be to you newe,
 Yet trust alwaie ye shal me findin trewe;
 And were it thing that me thought unfitting
 To you ne would I no such talis bring. 308

Nowe, my gode eme, for Godd'is love I pray
 (Quod she) come of and tel me what it is,
 For bothe I am agast what ye wol say,
 And eke me longith it to wit iwis,
 For whethir it be wel or be amis
 Say on; let me not in this fere ydwel.
 So wol I done: now herkenith I shal tel. 315

Now necè mine, the king's owne dere sonne,
 The gode, the wife, the worthy, fresh and fre,
 Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne,
 The noble Troilus, so lovith the
 That but ye helpe it wol his bane ybe.
 Lo! here is al: what shouldin I more sey?
 Doth what you list to make him live or dey. 322

But if ye let him dye I wol stervin,
 Have here my trouthe, nece, I n'il not lien,
 Al should I with this knife my throte kervin:
 With that the teris burst out of his eyen,
 And saide, If that ye done us both to dien
 Thus giltlesse, than have ye fishid faire;
 What mendeth it you though that we both apaire? 329

Alas! he whiche that is my lorde so dere,
 That trewe man, that noble gentle knight,
 That naught desirith but your frendly chere,
 I se him dyin, there he goth upright,
 And hastith him with al his fullè might
 For to ben slaine, if his fortune assente:
 Alas that God you suche a beaute sente! 336

If it be so that ye so cruil be
 That of his deth you listith nought to retch,
 That is so trewe and worthy as we se,
 No more than of a japor or a wretch,
 If ye be suche, your beaute may nat stretch
 To make amendes of so cruill a dede:
Avise ment is gode before the neede. 343

Wo worthe the faire gemme that is vertuleffe!
 Wo worthe that herbe also that doth no bote!
 Wo worth the beaute that is routhleffe!
 Wo worth that wight that trede eche undir fote!
 And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote,
 If therwithal in you ne be no routh
 Than is it harme ye livin, by my trouthe. 350

And also thinke wel that this is no gaude,
 For me were levir thou, and I, and he,
 Were hongid than that I should ben his baude,
 As high as men might on us al ise:
 I am thine eme; the shame were unto me
 As wel as the if that I should assent
 Through mine abet that he thine honour shent. 357

Now undirtonde, for I you nought require
 To binde you to him thorough no beheit
 Save one, that ye makin him bettir chere
 Than ye han don er this and more feste,
 So that his life be favid at the leste.
 This al and some is plainly our entente:
 God helpe me so I nevir othir mente. 364

Lo! this request is nought but skil iwis,
 Ne doute of reson parde is there none:
 I set the worst that ye dredin; this is,
 Men would wondir to sene him come and gone:
 Ther ayenist answere I thus anone,
 That every wight, but he be sole of kinde,
 Wol deme it love of frendship in his kinde. 371

What! who wol demin though he fe a man
 To temple gon that he th' imagis eteth?
 Thinke eke howe wel and wisely that he can
 Governe himselfe, that he nothing foryeteth,
 That wher he cometh he pris and thonk him geteth;
 And eke therto he shal come here so selde
 What force were it though all the toun behelde? 378

Suche love of frendes reignith in al this toun:
 And wrie you in that mantil evirma;
 And God so wis be my salvacioun
 As I have saide your best is to do so.
 But, gode nece, alway for to stint his wo
 So let your daungir sugrid ben alite
 That of his deth ye be not al to wite. 385

Creseide, which that herde him in this wise,
 Thought I shal fele what he menith iwis.
 Now eme, (quod she) what wouldin ye devise?
 What is your rede that I should done of this?
 That is wel said, quod he: certaine best is
 That ye him love aien for his loving,
 As love for love is skilful guerdoning. 392

Thinke eke how elde wallith every hour
 In eche of you a part of your beaute,
 And therfore er that age doth the devour
 Go love, for oldethere woll no wight love the.
 Let this proverbe a lore unto you be,
To late iware, quod Beaute, when it passe,
And elde ydauntith daungir at the losse. 399

The king's sole is wont to crie aloude,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
So longè mote ye livin, and all proude,
Til crow'is fete growin undir your eie,
And sende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may se your face a morrowe:
Neece, I bid him wishin you no more sorowe. 406

With this he stinte, and cast adoune the hed,
And she began to brest and wepe anone,
And saide, Alas for wo! why n'ere I ded?
For of this world the faith it al agone:
Alas! what shuldin straunge unto me done
When he that for my bestè frende I wende
Redith me love who shulde it me defende? 413

Alas! I would have trustid doutiles
That if that I through my disavinture
Had lovid eithir him or Achilles,
Hector, or any othir manir cature,
Ye n'old have had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwaie had me in repreve:
This false worlde, alas! who may it leve? 420

What! is this al the joy and al the fest?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful caas?
Is this the very mede of your behest?
Is this al paintid processe said (alas!)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredeful case for me purvey,
For so astonied am I that I dey. 427

With that she gan ful sorowfully to like:
 Ah! may it be no bet? (Quod Pandarus)
 By God I shall no more come here this weke,
 And God to-forne, that am mistrustid thus;
 I se wel now ye settin lite of us
 Or of our deth, alas! I, woful wretche,
 Might he yet live of me were nought to retche. 434

O cruil god of Deth, dispitous Marte!
 O Furies thre of hell! on you I crie,
 So let me ner out of this house departe
 Yf that I ment or harme or vilanie;
 But sithe I se my lorde mote nedis die,
 And I with him, here I me shrive, and sey,
 That wickidly ye done us bothe to dey. 441

But sithe it likith you that I be ded,
 By Neptunus, that god is of the Se,
 Fro this forthe shal I nevir etin bred
 Til that I mine own hert'is blode maie se,
 For certaine I wol die as sone as he:
 And up he sterte, and on his way he raught,
 Til she againe him by the lappe ycaught. 448

Creseide, which that wel nigh starfe for fere,
 So as she was aye the most ferefull wight
 That mightin be, and herde eke with her ere,
 And sawe the sorowful earnest of the knight,
 And in his prayir sawe eke non unright,
 And for the harme eke that might fallin more,
 She gan to rewe, and dredde her wondir fore: 455

And thus she thought; unhappis fallin thicke
 Al day for love, and in suche manir caas
 As men ben cruill in 'hem selfe and wicke;
 And if this man sle here himselfe, alas!
 In my presence, it a'il be no solas:
 What men would of it deme I can nat say;
 434 It nedith me full slyghly for to play. 462

And with a sorowful fighe she saide thrie,
 Ah, Lorde! me is betidde a fory chaunce,
 For mine estate lieth in a jeopardie,
 And eke mine em'is life lieth in balaunce;
 But nathèlesse with Godd'is govirnaunce
 I shal so done mine honour shal I kepe,
 441 And eke his life, and stintin for to wepe. 469

Of harmis two the lesse is for to chese;
 Yet had I levir makin him gode chere
 In honour than mine em'is life to lese;
 Ye faine ye nothing ellis me requere.
 No, wis, (quod he) mine owne nece so dere!
 Now wel, (quod she) and I wol don my paine;
 448 I shal mine herte ayen my lust constraine. 476

But that I n'il nat holdin him in honde,
 Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
 Ayenst my wil, but ellis wol I fonde,
 Mine honour save, plese him fro day to day;
 Therto n'olde I not onis have saide nay
 But that I dredde as in my fantasie;
 455 But *Cesse cause and aie cessith maladie.* 483

But here I make a protestacion
That in this proceſſe if ye depir go
That certainly for no ſalvacion
Of you, though that ye ſtervin bothè two,
Though al the worldè on o day be my fo,
Ne ſhal I ner on him have othir routhe.
I graunt it wel (quod Pandare) by my trouthe. 490

But maie I truſtin well to you (quod he)
'That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holdin truely unto me?
Ye, doutileſs, quod ſhe, myne uncle dere!
Ne that I ſhall have cauſe in this matere
(Quod he) to plain or aſtir you to preche?
Why no, parde; what nedith morè ſpeche? 497

Tho fellin thei in othir talis glade,
'Till at the laſt, O gode eme! (quod ſhe tho)
For love of God, whiche that us bothe ymade,
'Telle me how firſt ye wiſtin of his wo;
Wot non of it but ye? He ſayid No.
Can he well ſpeke of love, (quod ſhe) I preie?
'Tell me, for I the bet ſhall me purveie. 504

Tho Pandarus a litil gan to ſmile,
And ſayid, By my trouth I ſhall now tell:
This othir daie, nat gon full longè while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I well halfe a daie to dwell,
Right for to ſpekin of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekis mightin diſavaunce: 511

Sone after that begone we for to lepe
 And castin with our dartis to and fro,
 Till at the last he sayid he would slepe,
 And on the grasse adoune he laied him tho;
 And I astir gan romin to and fro, •
 Till that I herd, as I walkid alone,
 How he began full wofully to grone. 518

499

Tho gan I stalke him full softly behinde,
 And sikirly, the sothè for to saine,
 As I can clepe ayen now to my minde,
 Right thus to Love he gan him for to plain:
 He sayid, Lorde, have routh upon my pain;
 All have I ben rebell in mine entent,
 Now (*mea culpa*) Lorde, I me repent. 525

497

O God! that at thy disposicion
 Ledist forth the fine by just purveiaunce
 Of every wight, my lowe confession
 Accept in gre, and sende me soche penaunce
 As likith the; put from me disperaunce,
 That maie my ghost departe alwaie fro the:
 Thou be my shilde for thy benignite. 532

504

For certis, Lorde, so sore hath she me wounded
 That stode in blacke with loking of her eyen,
 That to mine hert'is botome it is founded,
 Through which I wot that I must nedis dien;
 This is the worst, I dare me nought bewrien,
 And well the hotir ben the gledis rede
 That men 'hem wrien with asbin pale and ded. 539

511

With that he smote his hedde adoune anone,
 And gan to muttre I nat what truely,
 And I with that gan still awaie to gone,
 And lete thereof as nothing wist had I,
 And come again anon and stode him by,
 And saied, Awake, ye slepin all to long;
 It semith me nought that Love doth you wrong 546

That slepin so that no man maie you wake;
 Who seie evir er this so dull a man?
 Ye, frende, (quod he) doe ye your hedd'is ake
 For love, and let me livin as I can:
 But though that he for wo was pale and wan
 Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce
 As though he should have led the newè daunce. 553

This passid forth till now this othir daie
 It fell that I come roming all alone
 Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
 Upon his bedde; but man so forè grone
 Ne herd I nevir; and what was his mone
 Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
 All sodainly he left his complaining, 560

Of whiche I toke somewhat suspection,
 And nere I come, and founde him wepè fore;
 And God so wise be my salvacion
 As I had nevir routhe of nothing more,
 For neither with engine ne with no lore
 Unnethis might I fro the deth him kepe,
 That yet fele I mine hertè for him wepe. 567

And God wot nevir sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preche,
Ne nevir was to wight so depe ysworne,
Er he me told who might yben his leche;
But not to you reherfin al his speche,
Or all his wofull wordis for to sowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone; 574

But for to save his life, and ellis nought,
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven;
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth that he and I maie liven.
Now have I plat to you mine herte yshriven,
And sith ye wote that mine entent is clene
Take hede thereof, for none evill I mene. 581

And right gode thrift I pray to God have ye
That han soche one icaught withoutin net;
And be ye wise, as ye be faire to se;
Well in the ring than is the rubie set:
There werin nevir two so well imet
Whan ye ben his all whole as he is your:
The mighty God us grant to se that hour! 588

Naie, thereof spake I nat. A ha! (quod she)
As helpe me God ye shendin every dele.
A, mercie, derè nece! anon (quod he)
What so I spake I ment it nought but wele,
By Mars the god that helmid is of stele:
Now beth not wroth, my blode, my necè dere!
Now well (quod she) foryevin be it here. 595

With this he toke his leue, and home he went:
Ye, Lorde, how he was glad and well bigon!
Creseide arose, no lengir she ne stent,
But streight into her closet went anon,
And set her doune as still as any stone,
And every worde gan up and doune to winde
That he had saied as it came her to minde.

603

And woxe somedele astonied in her thought
Right for the newe case; but whan that she
Was full avised, tho found she right nought
Of perill why that she oughte aferde be,
For man mai love of possibilitie
A woman so that his herte maie to brest,
And she nat love ayen but if her lest.

609

But as she sat alone and thoughte thus,
In field arose a skirmish all without,
And men cried in the strete, Se! Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekis rout:
With that gonne all her meine for to shout,
A! go we se; cast up the gatis wide,
For through this strete he mote to paleis ride,

616

For othir waie is fro the yatis none
Of Dardanus, there opin is the cheine:
With that come he and all his folke anone
An esse pace riding in routis tweine,
Right as his happie daie was (sothe to seine)
For whiche men saith maie not distourbid be
That shall betidin of necessite.

623

This Troilus sat on his baie stede
All armid save his hedde full richily,
And woundid was his horse, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rode a pace full softly;
But soche a knightly fight, lo! truily
As was on him was nat withoutin faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of Battaile. 630

So like a man of armis and a knight
He was to sene, fulfilled of high prowesse,
For bothe he had a bodie and a might
To doen that thing as well as hardinesse,
And eke to sene him in his gerè dresse,
So freshe, so yong, so weldy, semid he,
It was an hevin on him for to se. 637

His helme to hewin was in twentie places,
That by a tiffue hong his backe behinde,
His shelde to dashed with swardis and with maces,
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirlid had both horne, and nerse, and rinde;
And aie the peple cried, Here cometh our joie,
And next his brothir holdir up of Troie! 644

For which he wext a little redde for shame
When he so herd the peple on him crien,
That to beholde it was a noble game
How sobirliche he cast adoune his eyen.
Crescide anone gan all his chere espien,
And let it in her herte so softly sinke
That to her self she sayed, Ho! give me drinke. 651

For of her ownè thought she woxe al redde,
 Remembring her right thus, lo! this is he
 Whiche that mine uncle swereth he mote be dedde
 But I on him have mercie and pite :
 And with that ilkè thought for pure shame she
 Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
 While he and all the peple forth by past : 658

And gan to cast and rollin up and down
 Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
 And his estate, and also his renoun,
 His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse ;
 But moſte her favour was for his distresse
 Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
 To ſlaen ſoche one, if that he mentè trouth. 665

Now might ſome envious wight janglin thus,
 This was a ſodain love; how might it be
 That ſhe ſo lightly lovid Troilus?
 Right at the firſt ſight of him? Yea, parde.
 Now whoſo ſaied ſo mote he nevir the,
 For every thing a ginning hath it nede
 Er all be wrought withoutin any drede. 672

For I ſaie nat that ſhe ſo ſodainly
 Yaſe him her love, but that ſhe gan encline
 'To liken' him tho, and I have told you why;
 And aſtir that his manhode and his pine
 Made love within her hertè for to mine,
 For whiche by proceſſe and by gode ſervice
 He wanne her love, and in no ſodain wiſe. 678

And also blisful Venus wele arayed
 Satte in her sevynth house of hevin tho
 Disposid wele, and with aspectis payed,
 To helpin sely Troylus of his wo;
 And, sothe to sayne, she n'as nat all a foe
 To Troylus in hys natyvyte,
 God wote that wele the sonir sped in he.

686

Now let us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
 That ridith forth, and let us tournè fast
 Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full lowe
 There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
 Wheron she would apoinct her at the last,
 If it so were her eme ne would ycesse
 For Troilus upon her for to presse.

693

And, Lorde! so she gan in her thought argue
 In this matter of whiche I have you told,
 And what to doen best were, and what eschue,
 That plitid she ful oft in many fold;
 Now was her hertè warme now was it cold;
 And what she thought of somewhat shal I write
 As mine aucthour listith to me t'endite.

700

She thought wele first that Troilus person
 She knewe by sight, and eke his gentilnesse,
 And thus she said, All were it nought to doen
 To graunt him love, yet for his worthinesse
 It wer honor with plaie and with gladnesse
 In honeste with suche a lorde to dele
 For mine estate and also for his hele.

707

Eke well wote I my king'is sonne is he,
 And sith he hath to se me soche delite,
 If I would uttirliche his sight yslie
 Par'aventure he might have me in dispite,
 Thorough whiche I might stondin in worse plite;
 Now were I not wise me hate to purchase,
 Withoutin nede, there I maie stand in grace. 714

In every thing I wot there lieth mesure;
 For though a man forbiddith dronkinesse,
 He nought forbiddith that every cature
 Be drinkileffe for alwaie, as I gesse;
 Eke sith I wot for me is his distresse
 I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
 Sith it is so he menith in gode wise. 723

And eke I knowe of longè time agone
 His thewis gode, and that he n'is not nice,
 No vantour faine men certain he is none,
 'To wise is he to doen so grete a vice,
 Ne als I n'ill him nevir so cherice
 'That he shall make avaunt by justè cause;
 He shall me nevir binde in soche a clause. 728

Now set a case, the hardist is iwis,
 Men mightin demin that he lovith me;
 What dishonour were it unto me this?
 Maie I him let of that? why naie, parde;
 I knowe also, and alwaie here and se,
 Men lovin women al this toune about;
 Be thei the wers? why naie, withoutin doubt. 735

I thinke eke how he worthy is to have
Of all this noble toun the thriftyist
That woman is, if she her honour save,
For out and out he is the worthyist
Save only Hector, whiche that is the best;
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure:
But soche is love, and eke mine avinture.

714

742

Ne me to love a wondir is it nought,
For well wote I my self, so God me spede,
All woll I that no man wist of this thought,
I am one of the fairist out of drede,
And godelyist, who so that takith hede,
And so men saine, in all the toun of Troie;
What wondir is though he of me have joie?

727

749

I am mine ownè woman, well at ese,
I thanke it God, as astir mine estate,
Right yong, and stond untied in lustie lese,
Withoutin jelousie, and soche debate;
Shall no husbonde saine unto me Checke mate,
For eithir thei ben full of jelousie,
Or maistirfull, or lovin novelrie.

728

756

What shall I doen? to what fine live I thus?
Shall I not love in case if that me lest?
What? pardieux I am not religious;
And though that I mine hertè set at rest
Upon this knight, that is the worthiest,
And kepe alwaie mine honor and my name,
By all right it maie doe to me no shame.

bt. 735

763

But right as whan the sunnè shinith bright
 In March, that chaungith oftintime his face,
 And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
 Whiche ovirsprat the sunne as for a space,
 A cloudy thought gan through her soulè pace
 That ovirspradde her brightè thoughtis all,
 So that for fere almoste she gan to fall.

770

That thought was this; Alas! sith I am fre
 Should I now love and put in jeopardie
 My sikirnesse, and thrallin liberte?
 Alas! how durst I thinkin that folie?
 Maie I not well in othir folke aspie
 Ther dredfull joie, ther constreint and ther pain?
 Ther lovith non that ne hath why to plain.

777

For love is yet the mostè stormie life
 Right of himself that evir was begonne,
 For ever some mistrust or some nice strife
 There is in love, some cloud ovir the sunne;
 Thereto we wretchid women nothing conne
 Whan us is wo but wepe, and sit, and thinke:
 Our wretche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

784

Also these wickid tonguis ben so prest
 To speke us harme, eke men ben so untrue,
 That right anon as cessid is ther left
 So cessith love, and forth to love anewe:
 But *Harme idoe is doen, who so it rue;*
 For though these men for love 'hem first to rende,
 Full sharp beginning brakith oft at ende.

791

How oftn time hath it yknowin ben
 The trefon that to women hath be doe!
 To what fine is soche love I can not sene,
 Or where becomith it whan it is go
 There is no wight that wote I trowe so;
 Wher it becometh lo no wight on it sporneth;
 That erst was nothing into nothing turneth. 798

How busie (if I love) eke must I be
 To plesin 'hem that jangle' of love and deme,
 And coyen 'hem that thei saie no harm of me!
 For though there be no cause yet 'hem may seme
 Al be for harme that folke ther frendis queme;
 And who maie stoppin every wickid tong
 Or sounne of bellis while that thei ben rong? 805

And after that her thought gan for to clere,
 And saied, *He whiche that nothing undirtaketh*
Nothing achewith, be him loth or dere;
 And with an othir thought her hert yquaketh;
 Than slepith hope, and astir drede awaketh;
 Now hote now cold: but thus betwixin tway
 She rist her up and went her for to pley. 812

Adoun the staire anon right tho she went
 Into her gardine, with her necis thre,
 And up and down thei madin many' a went
 Flexippe' and she, Tarbe' and Antigone,
 To playin, that it joie was to se,
 And othir of her women a grete rout
 Her folowed in the gardine all about. 819

This yerde was large, and railed al the aleyes,
 And shadowed wel with blos'omy bowis grene,
 And benchid newe, and fondid all the weyes,
 In whiche she walkith arme in arme betwene,
 Till at the last Antigone the shene
 Gan on a Trojan song to singin clere,
 That it an hevin was her voice to here.

826

She saied, O Love! to whom I have and shal
 Ben humble subject, true in mine entent,
 As I best can to you, Lorde, yeve I all
 For evirmore mine hert'is love to rent,
 For nevir yet thy grace to no wight sent
 So blisfull cause as me, my life to lede
 In allè joie and suretie out of drede.

833

The blisfull God hath me so well beset
 In love iwis, that all that berith life
 Imaginin ne could how to be bet;
 For, Lorde, withoutin jelousie or strife
 I love one whiche that moste is ententife
 To servin well, unwerily' or unfained,
 That evir was, and lest with harme distained,

840

As he that is the well of worthinesse,
 Of trouth the ground, mirrour of godelihedde,
 Of wit Apollo, stone of fikirnesse,
 Of virtue rote, of luste findir and hedde,
 Thorough whiche is all sorowe fro me dedde:
 Iwis I love him best, so doeth he me;
 Now gode thrift have he where so er he be!

847

Whom should I thankin but you, god of Love,
Of all this blisse in whiche to bathe I ginne?
And thankid be ye, Lorde, for that I love:
This is the righte life that I am inne,
To flemin all manir of vice and sinne;
This doeth me so to vertue for to' entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende. 854

And who that saieth that for to love is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse,
He either is envious or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his shreudènesse
To lovin; for soche manir folke I gesse
Diffamin Love as nothing of him knowe;
They speke of Love, but nevir bent his bowe. 861

What is the funnè worse of his kinde right
Though that a man for febleffe of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright?
Or love the worse that wrèchis on it crien?
No wele is worth that maie no sorowe drien;
And forthy, *Who that bath an bedde of verre*
Fro cast of stonis ware him in the verre. 868

But I with al mine herte and al my might,
As I have saied, woll love unto my last
My owne dere herte, and all mine ownè knight,
In whiche mine herte ygrowin is so fast,
And his in me, that it shall evir last:
All did I dred at first to love begin
Now wote I well there is no pain therein. 875

And of her song right with that worde she stent,
 And therewithall, Now necè (quod Creseide)
 Who made this song now with so gode entent?
 Antigone answerde anon, and saide,
 Madame, iwis it was the godelyist maide,
 Of grete estate, in all the toun of Troie,
 Who led her life in moste honour and joie. 882

Forsothe so it ysemith by her song,
 Quod tho Creseide, and gan therwith to like,
 And sayid, Lorde! is there soche blisse emong
 These lovirs, as thei can so faire endite?
 Ye, wisse, quod freshe Antigone the white,
 For all the folke that have or ben on live
 Ne couldin well the blisse of love discrive. 889

But wenin ye that every wretche wote
 The parasite blisse of love? why naie, iwis;
 Thei wenin all be love if one be hote;
 Do' waie, do' waie! thei wote nothing of this:
 Men mote askin of sainctis if it is
 Ought faire in heven? and why? for thei can tell;
 And askin fendes if it be foule in hell? 896

Creseide unto the purpose nought answerde,
 But saied, Iwis it woll be night as faste;
 But every worde whiche that she of her herde
 She gan to printin in her hertè faste,
 And aie gan love her lasse for to agaste
 Than' it did erst, and sinkin in her herte,
 That she wax somwhat able to convert. 903

stent,

?

882

The day's honour and the heaven's eye,
 The night's foe, all this clepe I the sonne,
 Can westrin fast, and downward for to wrie,
 As he that had his day's course ironne,
 And white thingis woxin all dimme and donne
 For lacke of light, and sterris for to' apere,
 That she and all her folke in went ifere. 910

889

So whan it likid her to gon to reste,
 And voidid werin thei that voidin ought,
 She sayid, that to slepin well her leste;
 Her women sone unto her bedde her brought:
 Whan al was hush't than laie she stil and thought
 Of all this thing the manir and the wise;
 Reherce it nedith not, for ye ben wise. 917

is:

n tell;

896

de,

de

903

A nightingale upon a cedre grene
 Undir the chambir wall there as she laie
 Full loude ysong ayen the monè shene,
 Par'aventure in his bird's wise a laie
 Of love, that made her herte freshe and gaie;
 That herkenid she so long in gode entent
 Till at the last the deddè slepe her hent. 924

And as she slept anon right tho her met
 How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
 Undir her brest his longè clawis set,
 And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
 And did his herte into her brest to gon,
 Of which she nought agrose ne nothing smert,
 And forthe he flyith with herte left for hert. 931

Now let her slepe, and we our talis holde
 Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden
 Fro the scarmishe of the whiche I have tolde,
 And in his chambir fate and hath abidden
 Til two or thre of his messangirs yeden
 For Pandarus, and soughtin him full fast
 Til thei him found, and brought him at the last. 938

This Pandarus came leping in at ones,
 And sayid thus, Who hath ben well ibete
 To daie with swardis and with slongè stones
 But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?
 And gan to jape, and saied, Lorde how ye swete!
 But rise and let us soupe and go to reste:
 And he answerde him, Doe we as the leste. 945

With all the hast godèly as thei might
 Thei sped 'hem fro the soupir and to bedde,
 And every wight out at the dore him dight,
 And wher' him list upon his waie he sped,
 But Troilus thought that his hertè bledde
 For wo til that he herdè some tiding,
 And sayid, Frende, shall I now wepe or sing? 952

(Quod Pandarus) Be still and let me slepe,
 And doe' on thy hode, thine nedis spedde ybe,
 And chese if thou wolt sing, or daunce, or lepe:
 At short wordis, thou shalt trowe all by me,
 For, Sir, my nece woll doin well by the,
 And love the best, by God and by my trothe,
 But lacke of pursute marre it in thy slothe. 958

For thus serforth I have thy werke begon
 Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
 Her love of frendship have I to the won,
 And therto hath she laid her faith to borow;
 Algate o fote is hameled of thy forowe:
 What should I lengir sermon of it holde?

As ye have herd before all he him tolde. 966

But right as flouris through the cold of night
 Iclofid sloupin in ther stalkis lowe,
 Redressin 'hem ayen the sunnè bright,
 And spredin in ther kindè course by rowe,
 Right so gan tho his eyin up to throwe
 This Troilus, and saied, O Venus dere!

Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here. 973

And to Pandare he held up both his hondes,
 And sayid, Lorde, all thine be that I have,
 For I am whole, and brostin ben my bondes:
 A thousande Troyis who so that me yave
 Eche astir othir, God so wis me save,
 Ne might not me so gladin: lo! mine hert
 It spredith so for joie it woll to sterte.

But, Lorde, how shall I doen? how shall I liven? 980

Whan shall I next my own dere herte yse?
 How shall this longè time awaie be driven
 Till that thou be ayen at her fro me?
 Thou maiest answer, Abide, abide; but *He*
That langith by the necke, the sothe to saine,
In grete disese abidith for the paine.

987

All esly now, for the love of Marte,
 (Quod Pandarus) for every thing hath time,
 So long abide till that the night departe,
 For all so sikir as thou liest here by' me,
 And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
 And for thy werke somwhat as I shall saie,
 Or on some othir wight this chargè laie. 994

For parde God wot I have evir yet
 Ben redy the to serve, and to this night
 Have I not fainid, but emforthe my wit
 Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might;
 Doe now as I shall faine, and fare aright;
 And if thou n'ilte, wite all thy selfe the care:
 On me is nought along thine evill fare. 1001

I wote well that thou wisir art than I
 A thousande folde; but if I were as thou,
 God helpe me so, as I would uttirly
 Right of mine ownè honde write to her now
 A lettir, in whiche I would telle her how
 I farde amisse, and her besече of routh:
 Now helpe thy self, and leve it for no slouth. 1008

And I my self shall therwith to her gon,
 And whan thou wost that I am with her there
 Worthe thou up on a coursir right anon,
 Ye hardily, and that in thy best gere,
 And ride forth by the place as naught ne were,
 And thou shalt finde us (if I maie) sitting
 At some windowe into the strete looking. 1015

And if the list than maiest thou us salve,
 And upon me make thou thy countenaunce,
 But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
 To tarien ought; God shild us fro mischaunce!
 Ride forth thy waie and hold thy govirnaunce;
 And we shall speke of the somewhat I trow,
 Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eris glow. 1022

Touching thy lettir, thou are wise inough;
 I wot thou n'iste it deignèliche endite
 As make it with these argumentis tough,
 Ne scriven-like, or craftily it write;
 Beblotte it with thy teris eke alite,
 And if thou write a godely worde all soft,
 Though it be gode reherce it not to oft: 1029

For though that the best harpoure upon live
 Would on the bestè sounid jolly harpe
 That evir was with all his fingirs five
 Touche aie o string, or aie o warble harpe,
 Were his nailis poinctid nevir so sharpe,
 It shuldè makin every wight to dull
 To here his gle and of his strokis full. 1036

Ne jombre no discordaunt thing ifere,
 As thus, to usin termis of phislike;
 In lov'is termis holde of thy matere
 The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like;
 For if a paintir would ypainte a pike
 With aff'is fete, and heddid as an ape,
 It cordith not, so were it but a jape. 1043

This counsaile likid well to Troilus,
 But as a dredfull lovir he saied this;
 Alas! my derè brothir Pandarus!
 I am aſhamid for to write iwis,
 Lest of mine ignorance I ſaied amis,
 Or that ſhe n'olde it for diſpite receve;
 Than wer I ded, there might it nothing weve. 1050

To that Pandare answerid, If the leſt
 Doe that I ſaie, and let me therewith gon,
 For by that Lorde that formid eſt and weſt
 I hope of it to bring anſwere anon
 Right of her hond, and if that thou n'ilte non
 Let be, and ſorie mote he ben his live
 Ayenſt thy luſt that helpith the to thrive. 1057

(Quod Troilus) Depardieux I aſſent;
 Sithe that the liſte I woll ariſe and write,
 And bliſfull God praie I with gode entent
 The viage and lettir I ſhall endite
 So ſpede it, and thou Minerva the White
 Yeve thou me witte my lettir to deviſe;
 And ſet him down, and wrote right in this wiſe. 1064

Fiſt he gan her his right ladie to call,
 His hert'is life, his luſt, his ſorowe's leche,
 His bliſſe, and eche theſe othir termis all
 That in ſoche caſe ye lovirs allè ſeche,
 And in full humble wiſe, as in his ſpeche,
 He gan him recommaunde unto her grace;
 To tell all how it aſkith mokill ſpace. 1071

And aftir this full lowly he her praied
 To be nought wrothe though he of his folie
 So hardie was to her to write, and saied
 That love it made, or ellis must he die,
 And pitouſſy gan mercie for to crie;
 And aftir that he ſaied (and lied full loude)
 Himſelf was little worthe, and laſſe he coud, 1078

And that ſhe would have his conning excuſed,
 That litil was; and eke he dradde her ſo,
 And his unworthineſſe aie he accuſed;
 And aftir that than gan he tel his wo;
 But that was endeleſſe withoutin ho;
 And ſaid, he would in trouth alway him holde,
 And redde it ovre', and gan the lettre ſolde: 1085

And with his ſaltè teris gan he bathe
 The ruby in his ſignet, and it ſette
 Upon the wexe delivirliche and rathe,
 Therwith a thouſande timis er he lette
 He kiſte the lettre whan he had it ſhette,
 And ſaide, Lettre, a bliſful deſtine
 The ſhapin is; my lady ſhal the ſe! 1092

This Pandare toke the lettre, and betime
 A morowe to his nec'is paleis ſlerte,
 And faſt he ſwore that it was paſſid prime,
 And gan to jape, and ſaide, Iwis mine herte
 So freſhe it is (although it fore ſmerte)
 I maie nat ſlepe nevir a May'is morowe,
 I have a joly wo, a luſty ſorowe. 1099

Creseidè, whan that she her uncle herde,
 With dredeful herte, and desirous to here
 The cause of his comming, right thus answerde;
 Now by your faith, mine uncle (quod she) dere!
 What manir windis gidith you now here?
 Tell us your joly wo and your penaunce;
 How ferforth be ye put in lov'is daunce?

11c6

By God (quod he) I hop alwaie behinde,
 And she to laugh as though her herte to breste.
 (Quod Pandarus) Loke alwaie that ye finde
 Game in mine hode, but herkeneth if you lest;
 Ther is right now come to the toune a gest,
 A Greke espie, and tellith newè thinges,
 For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges.

1113

Into the gardin go we', and ye shal here
 Al privily of this a long sermoun.
 With that thei wentin arme in arme isere
 Into the gardin fro the chambre down;
 And what that he so ferre was that the soun
 Of that which he spake no man herin might
 He said her thus, and out the lettir plight:

1110

Lo! he that is al wholly your'is fre
 Him recommaundith lowly to your grace,
 And sent to you this letter here by me;
 Avisth you on it whan ye han space,
 And of some godely answere you purchace,
 Or helpe me God so, plainly for to saine,
 He maie not longè livin for his paine.

1117

Ful dredefully tho gan she stondin stil,
 And toke it not, but all her humble chere
 Gan for to chaungin, and said, Scribe nor bil,
 For love of God, that touchith such matere,
 Ne bring me none; and also, uncle dere!
 To mine estate have more regard I pray
 Than to his lust: what shouldin I more say? II34

And lokith now if this be reso'nable,
 And lettith not for favour ne for slouth;
 To faine a sothe, now is it covenable
 To mine estate, by God and by my trouthe,
 To take it, or to havin of him routhe
 In harming of my selfe or in reprove?
 Beare it ayen for him that ye on leve. II41

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,
 And sayid, Now is this the gretist wonder
 That evir I sawe; let be this nice fare:
 To dethè mote I smittin be with thonder
 Yf for the cite whiche that stondith yonder
 Would I a lettir to you bring or take
 To harme of you: what list you thus it make? II48

But thus ye farin well nigh all and some,
 That he that most desirith you to serve
 Of him ye retchin lest where he become,
 And whethir that he live or ellis sterve;
 But for al that, that er I maie deserve
 Refuse it not, (quod he) and hente her fast,
 And in her bosome doune the lettir thrust, II55

And said her, Now cast it awaie anon
That folke maie sene and gaurin on us twey.
(Quod she) I can abide till thei be gon;
And gan to smile, and said him, Eme, I pray
Suche answere as you list your selfe purvey,
For truily I wol no lettir write.

No, than wol I, (quod he) so ye endite. 1162

Therwith she lough, and sayid, Go we dine;
And he gan at himselfe to japin faste,
And sayid, Nece, I have so gret a pine
For love, that everiche othir daie I faste;
And gan his bestè japis forth to caste,
And made her so to laugh at his folie
That she for laughtir wenid for to die. 1169

And whan that she was comen' into the hall
Now eme, (quod she) we wol go dine anon;
And gan some of her women to her call,
And streight into her chambre gan she gone;
But of her besineffis this was one
Amongis othir thingis, out of drede
Ful privily this lettir for to rede. 1176

Avisid word by word in every line,
And founde no lacke; she thought he coude his gode,
And put it up, and went her in to dine;
And Pandarus, that in a studie stode,
Er he was ware she toke him by the hode,
And sayid, Ye were caught er that ye wiste.
I vouchsafe, (quod he) do whatere you liste. 1183

Tho within thei, and set 'hem doune and etc;
 And astir none ful slyghly Pandarus
 Gan draw him to the windowe nie the strete,
 And sayid, Nece, who hath arayid thus
 The yondir house that stante aforylene us?
 Which house? (quod she) and gan for to beholde,
 And knewe it wel, and whose it was him tolde: 1190

And fellin forth in speche of thingis smale,
 And sat in the windowe bothè twey.
 Whan Pandarus sawe time unto his tale,
 And sawe well that her folke wer al away,
 Now, necè mine, tel on (quod he) I prey;
 How likith you the lettre that ye wot?
 Can he theron? for by my trouth I n'ot. 1197

Therwith al rosy hewid tho woxe she,
 And gan to hum, and sayid, So I trowe.
 Aquite him wel for Godd'is love (quod he)
 My selfe tomedis woll the lettre sowe,
 And helde his hondis up, and sell on knowe.
 Nowe godè nece, be it nevir so lite,
 Yeve me the labour it to sowe and plite. 1204

Ye, for I can so writin (quod she) tho,
 And eke I n'ot what I shoulde to him say.
 Naie, nece, quod Pandarus, saie you not so,
 Yet at the lest ythonkith him I pray
 Of his gode will. O doth him not to dey!
 Now for the love of me, my nece dere!
 Refusith not at this time my praiere. 1211

Depardieux! (quod she) God leve al be wele;
 God helpe me so this is the first lettre
 That er I wrote, ye al or any dele:
 And into' a closet for to' avise her better
 She went alone, and gan her herte unfetter
 Out of Disdain'is prison but a lite,
 And set her doun and gan a lettre write,

1218

Of whiche to tel in shorte is mine entent
 Th' effecte as ferre as I can undirstonde:
 She thonkid him of al that he wel ment
 Towardis her, but holdin him in honde
 She n'olde not, ne makin her selvin bonde
 In love, but as his sustir him to plesse
 She would aie faine to done his hert an ese.

1225

She shette it, and to Pandare in gan gon
 There as he sat and lokid into strete,
 And doun she set her by him on a ston
 Of jaspre', upon a quissen of golde ibete,
 And said, As wisely helpe me God the grete
 I nevir did a thing with more paine
 Than write this, to the which ye me constraine.

1232

And toke it him: he thonkid her, and seide,
 God wot of thing ful oftin lothe begonne
 Comith ende gode: and, necè mine Creseide,
 That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
 Ought he be glad, by God and yondir sonne;
 For why? men faine *Impressionis light*
Fall lightly ben aie redy to the flight.

1239

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to longe,
 And harde was it your hertè for to grave;
 Now stinte, that ye no lengir on it honge,
 Al woldin ye the forme of daungir save,
 But hastith you to done him jôye to have,
 For trustith wel, *To long idone bardnesse*
Causith dispite ful oftin for distresse. 1246

And right as thei declarid this matere
 Lo! Troilus right at the stret's ende
 Came riding with his tenthè somme ifere
 Al softly, and thidirwarde gan bende
 There as they fate, as was his waie to wende
 To paleis warde, and Pandare him aspide,
 And said, Nece, ife who comith here ride! 1253

O fie not in! he sethe us I suppose,
 Lest he may thinkin that ye him eschue.
 Nay, nay, (quod she) and woxe as redde as rose:
 With that he gan her humbly to salue
 With dredful chere, and ofte his hewis mue,
 And up his loke debonairly he cast,
 And bekid on Pandare and forth by past. 1260

God wot if he sat on his horse aright,
 Or godely was befene that ilkè day;
 God wot where he were like a manly knight;
 What should I dretche, or tel of his aray?
 Creseidè, which that al these thingis sey,
 To tell in shorte, her likid al ifere,
 His person, his aray, his loke, his chere, 1267

His godely manir and his gentilnesse,
 So well, that never sithe that she was borne
 Ne haddin she suche routhe of his distresse;
 And howe so she hath hard ben here beforne
 To God hope I she hath now caught a thorne,
 She shal nat pul it out this nextè wike;
 God sende her mo such thornis on to pike! 1274

Pandarus, whiche that stode her fastè by,
 Felte iron hotte, and he began to smite,
 And seidè, Nece, I praye you hertilie
 Tel me that I shal askin you alite;
 A woman that were of his deth to wite,
 Withouten' his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
 Were it wel done? (quod she) Naie, by my trouth. 1281

God helpe me so, (quod he) ye say me sothe,
 Ye felin wel your selfe that I nought lie.
 Lo! yonde he rideth, (quod she) ye, so he dothe.
 Wel, quod Pandare, as I have tolde you thrie,
 Let be your nicete and your folie,
 And speke with him in esing of his herte:
 Let nicete nat do you bothè smerte. 1288

But theron was to hevin and to done,
 Confidiring al thing it maie nat be,
 And why? for shame; and it were eke to sone
 To grauntin him so gret a liberte,
 For plainly her entent (as sayid she)
 Was for to love him unwist if she might,
 And guerdon him with nothing but with sight. 1295

But Pandarus thought it shal nat be so;
 If that I maie this nice opinion
 Shal nat ben holdin fully yeris two;
 What should I make of this a longe sermon?
 He must assent on that conclusion
 As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
 And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve. 1302

And on his way full fast homewarde he spedde,
 And right for joy he felte his hert to daunce,
 And Troilus he founde alone abedde,
 That laie as done these lovirs, in a traunce,
 Betwixin hope and derke disesperaunce;
 But Pandarus right at his in comming
 He song, as who saith, Lo! somewhat I bring; 1309

And saidè, Who is in his bedde so sone
 Yburied thus? It am I, frende, (quod he.)
 Who? Troilus! naie, helpe me so the morie,
 (Quod Pandarus.) Thou shalt up rise and se
 A charme that was ysent right now to the,
 The whiche can helin the of thine axesse,
 If thou do forthwith all thy besinesse. 1316

Ye, through the might of God (quod Troilus.)
 And Pandarus gan him the lettir take,
 And saide, Parde God hath yholpin us:
 Have here a light, and loke on all these blake.
 But oftin gan the hert to glad and quake
 Of Troilus while he it gan to rede
 So as the wordis yave him hope or drede. 1323

But, finally, he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote, for somewhat he behelde
On which he thought he might his hertè rest,
Al covired she the wordis undir shelde;
Thus to the more worthy part he him helde,
That what for hope and Pandarus behest
His gretè wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But as we maie al daie our selvin se
Through more wode or cole kindlith the more fire,
Right so encrese of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful oft encrefith eke desire,
Or as an oke cometh of a litil spire,
So through this lettir which that she him sent
Encrefin gan desire, of whiche he brent. 1337

Wherefore I say alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to desirin more
Then he did erst through hope, and did his might
To presin on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writin to her of his sorowes fore
Fro day to day: he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he somewhat wrot or seide; 1344

And did also his othir observaunces
That till a lovir longith in this caas,
And astir that his dice turnid on chaunces
So was he eithir glad, or faide Alas!
And held astir his gestis aie his paas,
And astir suche answeris as he hadde
So werin his daies fory othir gladde. 1351

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
 And pitouſly gan aie to him to plaine,
 And him beſought of rede and ſome ſocours;
 And Pandarus, that ſawe his wode paine,
 Weſt wel nigh ded for routh, ſothe ſor to faine,
 And beſely with al his hert gan caſſe
 Some of his wo to ſleen, and that as faſte; 1558

And ſaidè, Lorde, and frende, and brothir dere!
 God wot that thy diſeſe ydothe me wo,
 But wolt thou ſtintin al this woful chere,
 And by my trouth er it be dayis two,
 And God toſorne, yet ſhal I ſhape it ſo
 That thou ſhalt come into a certaine place
 There as thou maielt thy ſelfe praïen her of grace. 1365

And certainly I n'ot if thou it woſte,
 But thei that ben experte in love it ſay,
 It is one of theſe thingis fortherith moſt
 A man to hâve a leiſir ſor to praie,
 And ſikir place his wo ſor to bewraie,
 For in gode hert it mote ſome routh impreſſe
 To here and ſe the giſtleſſe in diſtreſſe. 1372

Par'aventure thinkiſt thou though it be ſo
 That Kinde would her ydone ſor to beginne
 To have a manir routh upon my wo,
 Saiſh Daungir Nay, thou ſhalt me nevir win;
 So rulith ſhe her hert'is goſte within
 That though ſhe bendin yet ſhe ſtonte on rote;
 What in effect is this unto my bote? 1379

Volume VIII.

Q

Thinke here ayen whan that the sturdy oke,
On whiche men hackith oftin for the nones,
Recevid hath the happy falling stroke,
The grete sweight makith it fall all at ones,
As done these grete rockis or these milnestones,
For swiftir course cometh thing that is of wight,
Whan it discendith, than done thingis light. 1386

But rede that bowith doune for every blast
Ful lightly cessith winde it wol arise,
But so n'il not an oke whan it is cast,
It nedith me nought longe the for to' vise;
Men shal rejoyfin of a grete emprise
Atchevid wel, and stont withoutin dout,
Al have men ben the lengir there about. 1393

But, Troilus, now tel me if the lest
A thing whiche that I shal askin of the;
Whiche is thy brothir that thou lovist best
As in thy very hert'is privite?
Iwis my brothir Deiphobus, (quod he.)
Now, (quod Pandare) er hour'is twise twelve
He shal the ese unwist of it himselve. 1400

Now let me' alone, and workin as I may,
(Quod he) and to Deiphobus went he tho,
Which had his lord and gretè frend ben aie;
Save Troilus no man he lovid so:
To tel in shorte, withoutin wordis mo,
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cause whiche that ytouchith me. 1407

Yes, parde, (quod Deiphobus) wel thou wost
 Al that evir I may, and God tofore,
 Al n'ere it but for the man I love most,
 My brothir Troilus; but say wherfore
 It is, for sithe the day that I was bore
 I n'as, ne nevir more to ben I thinke,
 Ayenst a thing that mightin the forthinke. 1414

Pandarus gan him thanke, and to him seide,
 Lo! Sir, I have a lady in this toun
 That is my nece, and callid is Creseide,
 To whiche some men would done oppressioun,
 And wrongfully have her possessioun,
 Wherfore I of your lordship you besече
 To ben our frende withoutin more speche. 1421

Deiphobus him answerde, O! is nat this
 That thou spekist of to me thus straungely
 Creseide, my frende? Pandarus said him Yes.
 Than nedith (quod Deiphobus) hardily
 No more of this, for trustith wel that I
 Wol be her champion with spere and yerde;
 I ne rought nat though all her foes it herde. 1428

But telle me, thou that wost all this matere,
 How might I best availin now? let se.
 (Quod Pandarus) If ye, my lorde so dere,
 Woldin as now do this honour to me
 To prayin her to morowe, lo, that she
 Came unto you her plaintis to devise
 Her adversaries would of it agrise. 1435

And if I more durst prayin you as now,
 And chargin you to have so grete travaile,
 To have some of your brethrin here with you,
 That mightin to her cause bettir availe;
 Than wote I wel she mightin nevir faile
 For to ben holpin, what at your instance,
 What with her othir frendis govirnaunce. 1442

Deiphobus, whiche that comin was of kinde
 To al honour and bounte to consente,
 Answerde, It shal he done; and I can finde
 Yet greater helpe to this in mine entente:
 What woldest thou faine if for Helen I sent
 To speke of this? I trowe it be the best,
 For she may ledin Paris as her left. 1449

Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
 It nedith nat to praien him frende to be,
 For I have herde him, o time and eke other,
 Spekin of Creseide suche honour that he
 Maie faine no bet: such hap to him hath she
 It nedith nat his helpis more to crave;
 He shal be suche right as we wol him have. 1456

Speke thou thy selfe also to Troilus
 On my behalfe, and praie him with us dine.
 Sir, al this shal be done, (quod Pandarus)
 And toke his leve, and nevir gan to sine,
 But to his nec'is house as streight as line
 He came, and found her fro the mete arise,
 And set him down, and spake right in this wise: 1463

He saide, O very God so have I ronne,
Lo! necè mine, se ye nat how I swete?
I n'ot whethir ye the more thanke me conne:
Be ye not ware how that false Poliphete
Is now about estsonis for to plete,
And bringin on you advocacies newe?
I? no, (quod she) and chaungid al her hewe. 1470

What! is he more about me for to dretche,
And done? me wrong? what shal I don? alas!
Yet of him selfin nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Æneas,
That ben his frendis in suche manir caas;
But for the love of God, mine uncle dere!
No force of that, let him have al isere, 1477

Withoutin that I have inough for us.
Nay, (quod Pandare) it shal nothing be so,
For I have ben right now at Deiphobus,
At Hector, and mine othir lordis mo,
And shortly makid eche of 'hem his so,
That by my thrifte he shal it nevir winne
For aught he can, whan so that he beginne. 1484

And as thei cassin what was best to done
Deiphobus, of his owne curtisie,
Came her to praye in his propir persone
To holde him on the morowe companie
At dinir, whiche she ne wolde not denie,
But godely gan to his prayere obeye:
He thonkid her, and went upon his wey. 1491

Whan this was don this Pandarus anone,
 (To tellin in shorte) forth he gan to wende
 To Troilus as stil as any stone,
 And al this thing he tolde him orde and ende,
 And how that he Deiphobus gan to blende,
 And saide him, Now is time of that ye conne
 To here the belle to morow', and all is wonne. 1498

Now speke, now pray, now pitously complaine,
 Let nat for nicè shame, for drede or slouth;
 Somtime a man mote tel his ownè paine;
 Beleve it, and she wol have on the routh;
 Thou shalt ben favid by thy faith and trouth:
 But wel wot I thou now art in a drede,
 And what it is I lay I can arede: 1505

Thou thinkist now how should I don al this,
 For by my cheris mostin folke espie
 That for her love is that I fare amis,
 Yet had I levre' unwist for sorow die:
 Nowe thinke nat so, for thou dost gret folie,
 For I right now have foundin a manere
 Of sleight for to coverin al thy chere. 1512

Thou shalt gon ovirnight, and that as blive,
 Unto Deiphobus house as the to plaie,
 Thy malady awaie the bette to drive;
 For why? thou semist like, the sothe to saie;
 Sene after that doune in thy bedde the laie,
 And saie thou maist no lengir up endure,
 And lie right there and bide thine avinture. 1519

Say that the sevir is wont the to take
 The samè time, and lastin til a morowe ;
 And let se now how well thou canst it make,
 For parde fike is he that is in sorowe :
 Go now, farwel, and Venus here to borowe
 I hope and thou this purpose holdè ferme
 Thy grace she shal the fully there conferme. 1626

(Quod Troilus) Iwis thou alle nedelesse
 Counsaillist me that sikeliche I me faine,
 For I am fike in ernest doutelesse,
 So that wel nigh I stervin for the paine.
 (Quod Pandarus) Thou shalt the bettir plaine,
 And hast the lesse nede for to counterfete,
 For *Him men demin bote that men se fawete.* 1533

Lo! holde the at thy tristè close, and I
 Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe ydrive :
 Therwith he toke his leve all softly,
 And Troilus to his paleis went blive,
 So glad ne was he ner in al his live,
 And to Pandarus rede gan al assent,
 And to Deiphobus house at night he went. 1540

What nedith it to tellin al the chere
 That Deiphobus unto his brothir made,
 Or his axis, or his sikeliche manere
 How men gon him with clothis for to lade
 When he was laid, and how men would him glade?
 But all for nought; he helde forth aie the wife
 That ye han herde Pandare er this devise. 1547

But certaine is er Troilus him leide
 Deiphobus had praied him ovirnight
 To ben a frende and helping to Creseide;
 God wot that he that grauntid anon right
 To ben her fullè frend with al his might :
 But such a nede was it to praien him thenne
 As for to biddin a wode man to renne.

1554

The morow came, and nighin gan the time
 Of mealtide, whan that the faire *Queene* Helen
 Shope her to ben an hour astir the prime
 With Deiphobus, to whom she n'olde faine,
 But as his fustir homely, sothe to faine,
 She came to dinir in her plaine entent,
 But God and Pandare wist al what this ment.

1561

Came eke Creseide all innocent of this,
 Antigone her nece and Tarbe' also :
 But flie we now prolixite best is,
 For love of God, and let us fast ygo
 Right to the' effeete withoutin talis mo,
 Why al this folke assemblid in this place,
 And let us of ther saluingis pace.

1568

Gret honour did 'hem Deiphobus certaine,
 And fedde 'hem wel with al that might 'hem like,
 But evirmo, alas! was his refraine,
 My godè brothir, Troilus the fike,
 Lithe yet; and therwithal he gan to fike,
 And astir that he painid him to glade
 'Hem as he might, and cherè gode he made.

1573

Complainid eke Helen of his likenesse
 So faithfully, that pity was to here,
 And every wight gan wexin for axes
 A leche anon, and faide, In this manere
 Men curin folke, this charme I wol the lere :
 But there fate one, al list her nat to teche,
 That thought, yet best couldin I ben his leche. 1582

Aftir complaint him gonnin thei to preise,
 As folke don yet whan some wight hath begon
 To preise a man, and up with preise him reise
 A thousande folde yet higher than the son;
 He is, he can, that fewe othir lordes kon;
 And Pandarus of that thei would asserme
 He nought forgate ther praising to conferme. 1589

Herde al this thing feire Creseide wel inough,
 And every worde gan for to notifie,
 For whiche with sobre chere her hertè lough,
 For who is that ne would her glorifie
 To mowin suche a knight done live or die ?
 But al passie I, lest ye to longe ydwell;
 But for o fine is al that er I tell. 1596

The timè came fro dinir for to rise,
 And as 'hem ought arisin everichone,
 And gone a while of this and that devise;
 But Pandarus brake al this speche anon,
 And said to Deiphobus, Wol ye gon,
 If it your will be, as I erst you prayde,
 To spekin of the nedis of Creseide? 1603

Helen, which that by the hondè her helde,
 Toke first the tale, and saidè, Go we blive;
 And godely on Creseidè she behelde,
 And sayid, Jovis, let him nevir thrive
 That doth you harm, and reve him sone of live,
 And yeve me sorowe but he shal it rue
 If that I may, and allè folke be true. 1610

Tel thou thy nec'is case, (quod Deiphobus
 To Pandarus) for thou canst best it tell.
 My Lordis and my, Ladies, it stant thus;
 What should I lengir (quod he) do you dwell?
 He rongè 'hem out a proces like a bell
 Upon her foe, that hight was Polyphete,
 So heinous that men mightin on it spete. 1617

Answerde of this eche worfe of 'hem than other,
 And Poliphete thei gonnin thus to warien,
 An hongid be suche one were he my brother,
 And so he shal, for it ne maie nought varien:
 What should I lengir in this talè tarien?
 Plainliche al at onis thei her highten
 To ben her frende in all that er thei mighten. 1624

Spake than Helen, and said to Pandarus,
 Wot aught my lord my brothir of this matere,
 I mene Hector, or wote it Troilus?
 He said her Ye; but wol ye me now here?
 Me thinketh thus, fith that Troilus is here
 It were gode if that ye wouldin assent
 She tolde him her selfe al this er flie went; 1631

For he wol have the more her grese at herte,
 Bicause lo, she a worthie lady is,
 And by your wil I wol but in right sterre,
 And do you wete, and that anon iwis,
 If that he slepe or wol aught here of this:
 And in he lepte, and said him in his ere,
 God have thy soule! for brought have I thy bere. 1638

To smilin of this gan tho Troilus;
 And Pandarus withoutin rekinning
 Out went to Helen and Deiphobus,
 And said 'hem, So there be no taryng,
 Ne more prese, he wol well that ye bring
 Creseide my lady that is now here,
 And as he maie enduren he wol her here. 1645

But wel ye wote the chambre is but lite,
 And fewe folke may lightly make it warme;
 Now lokith ye, for I wol have no wite.
 To bring in prese that might I ydon him harme,
 Or him disefin for my bettir arme;
 Wher' it be bet she abide till estfonis
 Now lokith ye, that knowin what to don is. 1652

I say for me best is, as I can knowe,
 That no wight in ne wendè but ye twey,
 But it were I, for I can in a throwe
 Reherse her case unlike that she can sey,
 And astir this she may onis him prey
 To ben godelorde in short, and take her leve;
 This may not mo kill of his ese him reve. 1659

And eke for she is straunge he woll forbere
His ese, whiche that him darin nat for you;
Eke othir thing that touchith nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now,
That secrete is, and for the town'is prow :
And thei, that knew nothing of his entente,
Without more to Troilus in thei wente.

1666

Heleine in all her godely softly wise
Gan him salve and womanly to plaie,
And saied, Iwis ye mote algate arise;
Now, faire brothir, be all whole I praie;
And her arme right ovre' his shuldir laie,
And him with all her wit to recomfort;
As she best could she gan him to disport.

1673

So after this (quod she) We you beseeke,
My dere brothir! Deiphobus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To ben gode lorde and frende right hertily
Unto Creseide, whiche that certainly
Recevid wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare.

1680

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
And all her case reherce, and that anone:
Whan it was saied, sone astir in a while
(Quod Troilus) As sone as I maie gone
I woll right sain with all my might ben one,
Have God my trouth, her cause for to susteine:
Now good thrift have ye (quod Helenthe Quene.)

1687

(Quod Pandarus) And it your will ybe
That she maie take her leue er that she go.
O, ellis God forbid it! (tho quod he)
If that she vouchsafin for to doe so.

And with that worde (quod Troilus) Ye two,
Deiphobus and my sustir lefe and dere,
To you have I to speke of a matere,

To ben avifid by your rede the better;
And found (as hap was) at his bedd'is hedde
The copie of a tretise and a letter
That Hector had him sent to askin redde
If soche a man was worthy to ben dedde?
Wote I naught who, but in a grisly wise
He prayid 'hem anone on it avise.

Deiphobus gan this letter for to' unfolde
In ernest grete, so did Helen the Quene,
And roming outwarde fast it gonne beholde,
Dounward a steire, into an herber grene;
This ilke thing thei reddin 'hem betwene,
And largily the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to redin and to poure.

Now let 'hem rede, and tournè we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full faste prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the grete chambir, and that in hie,
And sayid, God save all this companie!
Come, necè mine, my ladie Quene Helen,
Abidith you, and eke my lordis twene.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardily;
The lasse presse the bettir: come forth with me,
And lokith that ye thonkin humbily
Them all thrè, and whan ye maie godily
Your time ifee takith of 'hem your leue,
Lest we to long his restis him bireve. 1722

All innocent of Pandarus entent
Quod tho Creseide, Go we, uncle dere!
And arme in arme inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordis and her chere;
And Pandarus in ernestfull manere
Sayid, All folke, for Godd's love I praie,
Stintith right here, and softly you plaie. 1729

Avisith you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amende!
And inward thus full softly begin;
Nece, I conjure and highly you defende,
On his behalfe whiche that soule us all sende,
And in the vertue of corounis twaine,
Slea nat this man that hath for you this paine. 1736

Fie on the devill! thinke whiche one he is,
And in what plite he lieth; come of anone;
Thinke all foche taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye bothè saine whan ye ben one;
And secondly, there yet devinith none
Upon you two; come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo! all the time is wonne. 1743

In titiring, and pursute, and delaies,
The folke devine at wegging of a stre,
And though ye would han astir merie daies
Than dare ye nat; and why? for she and she
Spake soche a worde; thus lokid he and he:
Lest time be losse I dare nat with you dele,
Come of therfore, and bringith him to hele. 1750

But now to you, ye lovirs that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort,
That laie and might the whispring of 'hem here,
And thought, o Lorde! right now rennith my fort
Fully to die or have anone comfort,
And was the first time that he should her praie
Of love; o mightie God! what shall he saie? 1757

Explicit liber secundus.

1736

1743

CONTENTS.

	Page
Remainder of The Romaunt of the Rose,	5
Troilus and Crefeide. In five bokes.	
————— Boke I.	93
————— Boke II.	132

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Jan. 4. 1783.



END OF VOLUME EIGHTH.

Page
5

93
132